

ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICE REPORT

June 30, 2006

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Submitted to

**Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

By

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Adoption Services

- ❖ Belief: Every child matters
 - Specific Belief: Children deserve a forever a family.
- **Outcome:** Children that cannot be reunited with their families are successfully placed in adoptive families and meet or exceed national standard by June 30, 2009

Source of information: National Standard – A state meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who exited foster care during the year under review to a finalized adoption, 32% or more children exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home.

Status: Statewide average during review of 7/1/05-5/31/2006 is 31.12%

Adoption:

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 – Increase the number of approved adoptive families.

Objective 1 – Recruit and retain the number of families willing to adopt children nine years of age and older by 10%

Task 1: Tasks are identified in the Adoption Recruitment Plan. Completion dates from 2005 – 2009.

Task 2: Implement Adoption Recruitment Response Team (RRT). Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in 2005 and ongoing.

Task 3: Evaluate the effectiveness of the Response Team. Completion date September 30, 2006.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006---annually thereafter

Status

Tasks 2 and 3 are not due for completion until September 30, 2006. Task 2 is completed.

A statewide adoption recruitment plan has been developed for the period of FFY 2005 – 2009. Tasks have been assigned to Central Office and adoption field staff for leadership in implementation of the plan. The plan is based upon three recruitment strategies: general recruitment, targeted recruitment, and child specific. Accomplishment dates fall between September 30, 2005 and September 30, 2009. Refer to the report on the adoption recruitment plan.

The task of implementing an Adoption Recruitment Response Team (RRT) in Arkansas was achieved in February 2005 and is ongoing. It is in support of the National Recruitment Campaign that is an effort funded by the United States Congress. The Children's Bureau,

The Collaboration to AdoptUSKids, administers the program. During state fiscal year 2006, AdoptUSKids made a decision to cluster states with one RRT contract provider as compared to the previous years when each state had a contract provider. Arkansas and Oklahoma were clustered together, and One Church, One Child in Oklahoma City received the contract. This became effective in October 2005.

AdoptUSKids has created nationwide television and radio commercials and adoption literature to recruit foster and adoptive families. When an Arkansas family responds to these recruitment activities, the RRT contacts the DCFS Adoption Specialist and Supervisor to provide the family's name and contact information. The RRT provides information, support, and encouragement to the family until the prospective foster and/or adoptive parent begins pre-service training. They report problems to the Adoption Services Unit Manager and work with this individual to resolve them. The RRT referred 156 Arkansas families to DCFS during state fiscal year 2006.

From July 2005 until October 2005, the contract for the RRT was with the DCFS web site, Arkansas Adoption Resource Exchange. 38 Arkansas families were referred from AdoptUSKids. Two individuals were employed (one is a foster and an adoptive parent) part-time. They performed the same responsibilities as described above for RRT. The same process was followed for other referrals of families who inquired about adoption (referral resources such as Adoption.com and DCFS web site). The total number of referrals for these three months is 395.

In May 2005, AdoptUsKids developed a nationwide adoption recruitment campaign in Spanish. DCFS is prepared to respond to Spanish speaking families who inquire about adoption by using interpreters that are available through purchase of service. The primary adoption brochure has been translated into Spanish and is being reviewed for accuracy.

Some discussion has occurred on developing an evaluation process to determine the effectiveness of the RRT. Inquiry reports are in CHRISNet and have been assessed. As a result of a meeting with DCFS adoption and CHRIS staff, revisions are being made to some of the existing reports and a few new reports are to be developed. An adoption recruitment plan committee is to be formed. The group will assist in assessing the effectiveness of the RRT.

Objective 2 – Recruit and retain the number of families willing to adopt African American children by 10%.

Task 1: Tasks are identified in the Adoption Recruitment Plan. Completion dates from 2005 – 2009.

Task 2: Implement the Foster/Adoption Inquiry Process. Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in 2005.

Task 3: Track and determine outcome of inquiries. Completion date September 30, 2006. Completed in 2005 and ongoing.

Task 4: Develop a report that compares inquiries with approved homes (CHRIS). Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Task 5: Identify effectiveness of the inquiry process and develop corrective action plan, if necessary. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 3, Action Step 3.5, Implement and monitor the statewide adoption recruitment plan in order to increase homes for African American children waiting for an adoptive home and for other waiting children.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006 – annually thereafter

Status

Tasks are not due for completion until September 30, 2006. Task 2 and 3 are completed.

A statewide adoption recruitment plan has been developed for the period of FFY 2005 - 2009. Tasks have been assigned to Central Office and adoption field staff for leadership in implementation of the plan. The plan is based upon three recruitment strategies: general, targeted, and child specific recruitment. Accomplishment dates fall between September 30, 2005 and September 30, 2009. Refer to the report on the adoption recruitment plan.

DCFS established a web based foster care and adoption inquiry system in August 2004. A family or designated DCFS employee can enter an inquiry into the system. Designated DCFS employees can track and monitor the outcome of an inquiry in the system. A designated DCFS employee must respond to an inquiry in three working days and complete a contact screen. A DCFS supervisor must approve the contact screen.

Inquiry reports are in CHRISNet and have been assessed. One existing report does compare inquiries with approved homes. DCFS adoption and CHRIS staff have met. The existing report will be revised to identify the number who is willing to adopt African American children. An adoption recruitment plan committee is to be formed. The group will assist in identifying the effectiveness of the inquiry process, and if necessary, develop corrective actions.

Goal 2 – Reduce the length of time from TPR to finalization or adoption

Objective 1- Reduce the length of time from TPR to pre-adoptive placement by 10% by June 30, 2009

Task 1: Identify time for TPR to placement into pre-adoptive home in a report from CHRIS and develop a baseline. Completion date September 30, 2005. Request extension to September 30, 2006.

Task 2: Reduce by 2% a year. Completion date September 30, 2006.

Task 3: Expand opportunities by implementation of the following: Adoption Recruitment Plan, Adoption Opportunities Grant, Foster Care Recruitment Plan, AdoptUSKids. Completion by September 30, 2006

Completion of tasks—ongoing, annual results of reports produced from these efforts currently in place all tasks due by June 30, 2009.

Source of Information: CHRIS reports

Status

In relation to Tasks 1 and 2, a CHRIS report was requested and received on January 4, 2006, which provided a list of children who had TPR dates and were placed in homes providing pre-adoptive services. The data was insufficient because it did not capture all of the pre-adoptive placements for foster parent adoptions in 2005. This was due to non-entry of pre-adoptive placement dates in CHRIS. A new report will be requested within a couple of months that will reflect the accurate number of pre-adoptive placements, which is essential to identifying the average time from TPR to pre-adoptive placement. This data will establish a baseline. A workgroup has been identified and a meeting is to be scheduled in July 2006.

Refer to reports that address the foster care and adoption recruitment plans.

The Adoption Opportunities Grant, Adoption Coalition Project, now has nine fully functional Coalitions in seven of the ten DCFS Areas. The following are some of the activities that the Coalitions have conducted to recruit adoptive (and foster) families:

- Adoption and family preservation picnic in Crittenden County
- Faith-based initiative in Craighead County
- Recruitment information booth at the Poinsett County Fair
- Newspaper recruitment articles in the West Memphis area
- Article in the Harding University newsletter on adoption and foster care
- Newsletters developed in Baxter, Crittenden, White, and Craighead Counties
- Articles in local magazine, Searcy Living, featuring waiting children
- Adoption information distributed to African American churches in Area IX
- Two workshops in North Central Arkansas about adoption matching and a related adoption picnic
- A one month series on adoption in the Baxter Bulletin newspaper
- A luncheon for local ministers in North Central Arkansas to educate and engage them to collaborate with the Coalition
- Weekly newspaper articles in September and October to recruit adoptive families
- Recruitment information booth at the Baxter County Fair
- Mailings to local churches about adoption in the Forest City area
- Recruitment information booth at local supermarkets in the Forest City area
- Appreciation dinner for foster and adoptive parents in the Forest City Area

- Recruitment information booth at the St. Francis County Fair
- Recruitment information booth to recruit foster and adoptive parents at Family Fun Day in Forrest City area
- Recruitment information booth at Wal-Mart and UAM in Monticello
- Recruitment information booth at the South East Arkansas Fair
- Presentation at the St. Marion District Association at the Mt. Nebo Baptist Church in Pine Bluff
- Radio ad in the Pine Bluff area
- Open house/recruitment and appreciation program for foster and adoptive parents in Texarkana
- Newspaper articles about adoption and foster care in the Texarkana area
- National Adoption Day recruitment program in the Texarkana area
- Heart Gallery premier/reception in the Hot Springs area (professional photograph display of waiting children)
- Newspaper articles in the Democrat Gazette and Sentinel Record about National Adoption Day event in Hot Springs
- National Adoption Day event and reception at the Garland County Juvenile Court
- Newspaper article on adoption for Mother's Day in Magnolia area—targeted to the African American community
- Recruitment information booth at the Columbia County Fair
- Adoption picnic in Little Rock to recruit adoptive families for waiting children
- Survey to assess, create, and improve post adoption services to adoptive families in Pulaski County and throughout the state
- Efforts underway to establish a “buddy family system” in Pulaski County to support new adoptive families throughout the adoption process
- Plans underway to enhance the DCFS web base, the Arkansas Adoption Resource Exchange
- Recruitment booth at RazorFest in Fayetteville

Refer to comments about the Recruitment Response Team (RRT) and Adoption.com under Goal 1, Objective 1.

In addition, from July 2005 to February 2006, RRT (Arkansas based) and/or DCFS adoption staff were involved in the following recruitment activities:

- Statewide adoption picnic in Little Rock
- Recruitment information booth: Transition to Adulthood Conference in Little Rock, 19th Annual Minority Opportunity Conference in Little Rock, Kidz Fair at Alltel Area in Little Rock, Substance Abuse Conference in Little Rock, CASA Conference in Little Rock, Mental Health Conference in Hot Springs, World Fest in Little Rock, Smoke on the Water BBQ and Musical Festival in Pine Bluff, Adoption Fair at St. Mark's Baptist Church in Little Rock, Drum Majors Leadership Conference (Arkansas Martin Luther King Commission) in Hot Springs, 8th Annual

Arkansas Conference for Parent Educators in Hot Springs, and Mid South Summit/Black Expo in Little Rock.

- **A radio interview in Little Rock targeted to the African American community**
- **Three news segments on local television stations targeted at recruitment of adoptive families**
- **CBS Home for the Holidays**

Objective 2 – Reduce the length of time from pre-adoptive placement to finalization by 10% by

June 30, 2009

Task 1: Identify time for finalization of foster parent adoptions. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Task 2: Assess the barriers of the foster parent adoption process. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Task 3: Merge the current foster home study and adoption home study into one process/form. Completion date by September 30, 2006

Task 4: Make necessary changes to policy and practice based on the above. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006

Source of Information: CHRIS reports

Status

Efforts are underway to complete Task 1. A report from CHRIS has been requested and received. For state fiscal year 2005, the average time between pre-adoptive placements to finalization is 3 months. The insufficient data as described in Goal 2, Objective 1, Task 1 and 2, impacts on this task as well. Future reports will need to be assessed to determine if the average length of time changes. The requested report will remain in CHRIS and will refresh quarterly.

Separate work groups are being formed to address task 1 and 2. Each group will be meeting in July 2006. One or two meetings may be sufficient to address each task since group members have a lot of knowledge and experience. Steps have been taken to merge requirements and processes to be a foster and/or adoptive parent. The completion date to change policy and procedures is appropriate.

Objective 3 – Increase permanency for children waiting to be adopted by 10% by June 30, 2009

Task 1: Monitor the results of the Adoption Recruitment Plan. Completion dates from 2005 – 2009.

Completion of tasks: Refer to dates in strategic plan

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 3, Action Step 3.5, Implement and monitor the state wide adoption recruitment plan in order to increase homes for African American children waiting for an adoptive home and for other waiting children.

Source of Information: CHRIS reports

Status

A statewide adoption recruitment plan has been developed for the period of FFY 2005 – 2009. Tasks have been assigned to Central Office and adoption field staff for leadership in implementation of the plan. The plan is based upon three recruitment strategies: general, targeted, and child specific recruitment. Accomplishment dates fall between September 30, 2005 and September 30, 2009. Refer to report on the adoption recruitment plan.

Foster Care

Belief: Every Child Matters.

- Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First
 - Outcome: Preventing abuse and neglect in out of home placements by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: National Standard - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children in foster care in the State during the period under review, the percentage of children who were the subject of report of child maltreatment determined to be true by a foster parent or facility staff is 0.57% or less.

Status: Statewide average for the period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 0.19%

- Specific belief: Children deserve to thrive not just survive
 - Outcome: Children in care move less and meet the national standard or above by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: National Standard - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who have been in foster care less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal, 86.7% or more children had no more than two placement settings.

Status: Statewide average of period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 64.77%

- Outcome: Physical, medical, and emotional health needs are met (immunizations up to date, medication management maintained, check ups, weight/eye, and dental, grooming)

Physical Health of Child target will be substantially achieved by:

- 1st year 90% or by June 30, 2005
- 2nd year 92% or by June 30, 2006
- 3rd year 93% or by June 30, 2007
- 4th year 94% or by June 30, 2008
- 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 22 Physical Health of child

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 94.85%

Mental Health Needs of Child target will be substantially achieved by:

- 1st year 80% or by June 30, 2005
- 2nd year 83% or by June 30, 2006
- 3rd year 85% or by June 30, 2007
- 4th year 90% or by June 30, 2008
- 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 23 Mental Health of Child

Status: Statewide average of period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 95.52%

- Outcome: Children in care have improved educational performance

Educational Services will be substantially achieved by

1st year 85%, or by June 30, 2005

2nd year 88%, or by June 30, 2006

3rd year 91%, or by June 30, 2007

4th year 93% or by June 30, 2008

5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 21

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 92.09%

➤ Specific Belief: Children deserve a forever family

- Outcome: Children are successfully reunited with their family to meet or exceed national standard by June 30, 2009.

Source of Information: National Standard: - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, 76.2% or more children were reunified in less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal from home.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 86.04%

- Outcome: Siblings are placed together, unless it is clinically inappropriate to do so.

Placement with siblings will be substantially achieved by

1st year 85%, or by June 30, 2005

2nd year 87%, or by June 30, 2006

3rd year 90%, or by June 30th, 2007

4th year 92.5% or by June 30, 2008

5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information – QSPR Item 12

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 86.36%

❖ Belief: Strong Communities Build Strong Families

➤ Specific Belief: People belong in healthy community

- Outcome: Children are placed in the least restrictive placement, in close proximity to their familiar environment.

Proximity of placement of child will be substantially achieved by

1st year 81%, or by June 30, 2005

2nd year 85%, or by June 30, 2006

3rd year 90%, or by June 30, 2007

4th year 92% or by June 30, 2008
5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 11

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 91.55%

- ❖ Belief: Our Job is To Empower people To Help Themselves
 - Specific Belief: Our services should promote self-worth, dignity and respect.
 - Outcome: Parents and age appropriate child are involved in the development of the case plan

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be substantially achieved by

70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005
77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006
84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007
91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008
95% 5th year. or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 18

2nd source will be the Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 62.01%.

Foster Care Goals and Objectives

Goal # I - Recruit, train and retain foster families in sufficient numbers to meet the needs.

Objective #1 - Implement statewide coordinated recruitment plan

- Task # 1 - PIP tasks for action step 3.1 increases by 10% the number of foster parents recruited who are willing to accept children that enter foster care and meet their special needs. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

The foster parent recruitment committee has developed a statewide recruitment plan. The agency continues to address the need to raise the level of awareness of the need for more foster homes and to promote the Division's recruitment efforts. The agency recently collaborated with the Administrative of the Courts and the Court Improvement Project on a statewide campaign on the need for foster parents.

- Task # 2 – Evaluate the effectiveness of the statewide recruitment plan. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

The agency created a foster parent recruitment committee comprised of staff from the Community Service Section, Community Support Section and the Planning Unit. The committee will evaluate the effectiveness of the statewide recruitment plan.

- Task # 3 - Analyze the Foster Family Needs Assessment grid results with CHRIS approval of foster homes. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

The Family Foster Home Needs Assessment tool was re-designed to better assist with specific county recruitment and is in current use. The foster care committee recently made some recommendations to make the tool more easily printed.

- Task # 4 – Evaluate the Areas' recruitment plans and retention of foster homes. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

Each area has developed a foster parent recruitment and retention plan, and has submitted to the foster care recruitment committee.

Completion of tasks by: September 30, 2007

Objective #2 - Provide pre-service and in-service training for foster parents in a timely and flexible manner.

- Task # 1 – Continue to conduct the quarterly meetings, regional meetings and PDT meetings regarding homes. Completion by: September 30, 2006
- Task # 2 – Provide status reports on the results of the meetings. Completion by: September 30, 2006
- Task # 3 – If issues are discussed and recommendations are needed, develop and implement as necessary. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

DCFS continues to have quarterly meetings that involve Midsouth, LARP staff, Community Support staff and Community Service Staff. The meetings are set up to identify issues and problems with pre-service and in-service trainings for foster parents. Midsouth prepares minutes of the meetings. Also, new policies and/or procedures have been developed based on the recommendations made by DCFS and Midsouth.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006 – on-going

Objective #3 - Formal Kinship Care Program will be developed.

- Task # 1 – Identify options for developing a Kinship Care program and include informal and the out of home placements RT children. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

DCFS developed a policy to preserve family connections. The policy allows a relative home to be opened by DCFS (for no more than six months) after the division conducts health and safety checks on the relative and the relative's home. The relative does not receive foster board; however, they can apply for and receive public assistance. If the foster home is not open after the six-month placement the child will be removed from the home or the courts may grant the relative custody of the child.

- Task # 2 – Develop recommendations for subsidizing guardianship. Completion by September 30, 2008

Status

The agency established a workgroup to research and develops a proposal for the consideration of a subsidized guardianship program for our state. The committee agreed that there are many aspects to consider with a program of this magnitude and broke into work groups to discuss the following: child considerations, caregiver considerations, state considerations, and funding considerations. Each workgroup reported to the committee and discussion was held as to the decisions pertinent to each group.

- Task # 3 – Develop recommendations for a kinship care program in DCFS for executive staff approval. Completion by September 30, 2007

- Task # 4 – Implement the recommendations approved by executive staff. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2008

Objective # 4 – Ensure adequate placement options for children in other placements.

- Task # 1 – Identify demographics about children placed in other settings. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

The foster care committee will continue to meet with CHRIS to review reports that identify demographics about the children placed in other settings. Task due date for 9/30/06 is on target.

- Task # 2 – Identify the kinds of services that are effective. Completion by September 30, 2007
- Task # 3 – Identify other placement options currently not available in Arkansas i.e. receiver homes, assessment facilities and develop recommendations for consideration. Completion by September 30, 2008

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2008

Goal # II - Ensure health and safety of child is maintained while in foster care.

Objective #1 - Children's needs including basic placement needs are assessed upon entry into foster care.

- Task # 1 – Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - Revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case. Completion by: September 30, 2007

Status

The workgroup submitted their request for changes to CHRIS and CHRIS has been making changes over the last few months. The new risk assessment, family strengths and needs assessments; as well as the case plan screens are being completed with a testing to occur sometime in July. After September 2006, additional changes will be made to meet all the requests of the PIP workgroup. Task due date for 9/30/07 is on target.

- Task # 2 – Implement risk assessment and family assessment process according to the PIP work plan. Completion by September 30, 2007
- Task # 3 – Completion Action Step 2.6. of the PIP - Increase the percentage of children in foster care who receive initial, comprehensive and ongoing mental health services that are documented in CHRIS and hard copy files. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

The average percentage for 24-hour initial health screens stood at 82 percent and for 72-hour initial health screens stood at 80 percent. Some Areas reported that it was difficult to find medical providers who will take new Medicaid clients and who will do health screens on foster children who enter foster care on the weekends. The Agency is working with the Division of Medical Services to address the limitation of medical providers.

The average percentage for completed comprehensive health assessments (CHA) stood at 86 percent. Some Areas reported communication problems that impacted timely CHA's when children were placed outside their home county. Also, some Areas reported staff shortage; however, they have refined their processes for scheduling and monitoring CHA's.

- Task # 4– Utilize results of QSPR reports to monitor task 2. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2008

Objective # 2 - Children are placed in the least restrictive most family like setting – (close proximity to siblings)

- Task # 1 – Establish baseline of children placed in their home county. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

The foster care committee has met and discussed the barriers of placing children in their home county. The committee feels that recruitment of new foster homes in some areas will address this issue. The committee will meet in July and establish the baseline.

- Task # 2 – Establish baseline of children placed together with their siblings. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

The foster care committee will continue to meet with CHRIS to review information reports that identify demographics about the children placed in other settings. Task due date for 9/30/06 is on target.

- Task # 3 – Address steps to get siblings placed together when they are not initially placed together. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2008

Objective # 3 - Children are placed with siblings, unless it is inappropriate to do so.

- Task # 1 – Completion of Action Step 3.1 of the PIP and monitor foster care recruitment plan. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Goal # III - Ensure DCFS capacity to provide services focused on reunification or other permanency goals in a timely manner.

Objective # 1 - Develop sufficient services to support families.

- Task # 1 – Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - Revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

Work has been done to incorporate the risk assessment and the family assessment into CHRIS. The Assessment and Case Plan work group is planning a walk-through with CHRIS. Implementation of the assessment process in the CHRIS format will lead to the system and identification of services needed, a critical step in service development.

- Task # 2 – Completion of Action Step 2.2 in the PIP - Expand the current array of services and address service gaps, especially in rural areas, to meet the needs of children and families served by DCFS in order to protect children and prevent removal. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Objective # 2 - Provide opportunities for foster families to be involved with biological families.

- Task # 1 – Ensure foster parent and biological parent are involved in planning for services and developing the case plan. Completion by September 30, 2007
- Task # 2 – Explore feasibility of visits taking place in the foster home. Completion by September 30, 2007
- Task # 3 – Train staff to inform both the biological parent and foster parent of the importance of visits between child and parent. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Independent Living

❖ Belief: Every Child Matters

- **Specific Belief: Children deserve to thrive not just survive**

Belief: Our job is to empower people to help themselves

- **Outcome: By June 30, 2009, 85% of youth who have been assessed and are participating in ILP life-skills training will graduate from high school or get a GED by June 30, 2009.**

Baseline figures are currently believed to exceed 60% but the data has not been consistently collected or reported in CHRIS during 2005 and 2006 for youth leaving foster care.

65% by June 30, 2007

75% by June 30, 2008

85% by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: Of the youth leaving foster care at majority, CHRIS information will indicate if they have received a High School Diploma, a GED, are employed or are in an educational post-secondary program at the time of case closure. CHRIS will require the education and employment screens for youth 16 years and older leaving foster be completed prior to closure.

- **Outcome: By June 30, 2009, 85% of youth ages 14 years old and up are assessed for life skills.**

Baseline figures are currently believed to exceed 60% but the data has not been consistently collected or reported in CHRIS during 2005 and 2006 for youth leaving foster care.

65% by June 30, 2007

75% by June 30, 2008

85% by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 10 (Item 8a of Item 10 reviews if there an assessment for life skills and if there is a case plan with the outcomes of the assessment is developed.)

- **Outcome: By June 30, 2009, 85% of youth participating in IL services will have a documented transitional plan as a part of their case plan.**

Baseline figures are currently believed to exceed 60% but the data has not been consistently collected or reported in CHRIS during 2005 and 2006 for youth leaving foster care.

65% by June 30, 2007

75% by June 30, 2008

85% by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 10

(Item 8a of Item 10 reviews if there an assessment for life skills and if there is a case plan with the outcomes of the assessment is developed.)

- **Outcome: By June 30, 2009, 85% of youth participating in Independent Living will receive planned transitional/independent living services.**
- **Baseline figures are currently believed to exceed 60% but the data has not been consistently collected or reported in CHRIS during 2005 and 2006 for youth leaving foster care.**

65% by June 30, 2007

75% by June 30, 2008

85% by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 17

INDEPENDENT LIVING – Strategic Plan Goals, Objectives, Tasks, Measurements

GOAL 1

Independent Living services will enhance foster children being safe and self-sufficient.

Objective: Develop formal job descriptions and duties for Independent Living (IL) Coordinator positions

Task 1

Review current job descriptions of IL Coordinators and define roles and responsibilities of the IL Coordinator. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Social Service Aide position information was reviewed and compared to actual job requirements of IL Coordinators in September 2005. Other information and suggestions were gathered from ILP Coordinators during September and October 2005 to further define expected roles and functions of IL Coordinators. Completed 12-31-05

Task 2

Identify job specifications needed for the IL Coordinators – Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Job specifications for IL Coordinators in all 10 DCFS service areas were condensed into a single recommended position description. Completed 12- 31-05

Task 3

Based on the identification, make recommendations regarding the appropriate job specifications and submit for approval from Executive Staff. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Job specifications for Independent Living Coordinator I and II were written and submitted to Executive Staff. Recommendations regarding IL position Levels I (Grade 15) and II (Grade 17), Supervisory Levels, as well as, workloads/caseloads were originally submitted for consideration in November 2005.

Completed 12-31-05

Task 4

Identify IL competencies and specific training needs of this position. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Training needs of IL Coordinators have been discussed and identified. Training is needed in the use of the CHRIS system in both input and output, in resource development for growth in the availability of life-skills training resources and in effective ways to communicate and coordinate with juvenile courts to achieve case-plan goals. Completed 12-31-05

Task 5

Explore supervisory needs of this position and develop recommendations. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: A recommendation that supervisory levels for the IL Coordinator position be the same staff positions area to area to promote better supervisory communications between areas and to reduce or eliminate information lags and caseload assignments when clients move from area to area. Supervisory staff at the same levels will know and work with each other, have the same organizational responsibilities and any protocol problems will be reduced or eliminated. This recommendation was forwarded with the recommendations package in December 2005. Completed 12-31-05

Objective 2

All eligible foster youth will receive independent living services

Task 1

Ensure that all eligible IL youth are assessed. Completion by 9-30-07

STATUS: CHRIS reports indicate that 53.8% of eligible teens who have been assessed and needed life-skills training, have had this added to their case plans.

Barrier: Newly eligible teens are not being referred by caseworkers/supervisors to IL Coordinators for the initial life-skills assessments and are not being assigned to IL workloads

Task 2

Either a CHRIS tickler be developed or a monthly report generated that alerts IL, FSW and supervisors when children turn 14 while in care or enter care and are 14 or older. Completion 9-30-07

STATUS: The 14th birthday is flagged to alert staff that a referral and an IL assessment need to be completed for youth becoming eligible. In addition, the system generates a report that flags and lists youth who have been in the system for 30 days or more without any selection of life skills training being made. Life skills training needs can only be identified by assessment, and an assessment can only occur after a referral is made.

Objective 3

Independent Living Program services curriculum (life-skills training) will be developed based on levels (age, acquisition of skills/training) and ability of the individual youth

Task 1

Review all cases identified as needing life-skills training. Completion by 9-30-07

STATUS: A higher proportion of youth are being referred for IL services after becoming eligible. The need for life-skills training is being correlated with case planning to help ensure that life-skills are addressed in the case plan/transitional plan.

Task 2

Develop a statewide curriculum detailing the 15 categories of training for youth in the Independent Living Program. Completion by 9-30-07

STATUS: Still in progress. Limited by availability of Area life-skills training resources and Coordinators lack of training to find, recruit, utilize and maintain curriculum resources. As resources grow, curriculum standardization will also improve.

Objective 4

All necessary parties who will be included in case planning and service delivery for the youth will be provided a copy of the IL plan

Task 1

FSW will notify affected parties in advance of regularly planned staffing and the 17-17 ½ staffing and will include the youth, IL Coordinator, other secondary workers and foster parent(s). Others may include attorney- ad-litem, OCC personnel, supervisor and birth parents. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Notices are being sent to all affected parties prior to staffing.

Task 2

Attendees and interested parties will be provided with copies of assessment results and case and life-skills plans, updates and changes. Completion by 9-30-06.

STATUS: All parties are being provided with copies of new, updated and changed client goals and plans.

Objective 5

Independent Living Program Services will be coordinated with other services e.g. Foster Care, Therapeutic Foster Care, Job Corps, WIA, and Education

Task 1

Individual Services will be developed for each youth – mentoring, on-the-job training, internship, volunteering. Completion by 6-30-09

STATUS: Youth are being included in planning their own case services and having input into services they can both receive and provide. In addition, collaboration is underway with Higher Education, 2-Year Colleges, AWIA, Job Corps, DYS, County Extension Services, Youth Services, Centers for Youth and others to identify and fill service gaps for eligible IL youth and former foster youth.

Task 2

Educational plans and services will be based on the youth's interests and abilities. Completion by 6-30-09

STATUS: Youth are included in secondary and post-secondary educational planning. IL Youth Advisory Board members advocate for area youth to request to be involved in case planning and to remain in care so that they may receive services.

Protective Services

❖ Belief: Every Child Matters

➤ Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First.

- Outcome: Child is safe, no repeat true reports – during and 6 months after services provided and case closed Goal date: 95% by June 30, 2009.

Source of Information:

National Standard - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who were victims of a report of child maltreatment determined true during the first six months of the period under review, 6.1% or fewer children had another report determined within six months.

QSPR – item 2 – Repeat Child Maltreatment – 95% by June 30, 2009 to substantially achieve this target.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 92.53%

Outcome: Six month after case closed, no removal required; safety and risk assessment indicates child is safe. Goal Date: June 30, 2009

Source of Information – DCFS Annual Report Card

Status: Report to be developed to gather data to measure progress.

➤ Specific Belief: Children deserve to thrive, not just survive.

- Outcome: Physical, medical and emotional health needs are met (immunizations up to date, medication management is maintained, checkups, weight/eye and dental, grooming etc)---Physical Health of Child target will be substantially achieved by:
 - 1st year 90%, or by June 30, 2005
 - 2nd year 92%, or by June 30, 2006
 - 3rd year 93%, or by June 30, 2007
 - 4th year 94% or by June 30, 2008
 - 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR – Item 22

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 94/85%

Mental Health of Child target will be substantially achieved by:

1st year 80%, or by June 30, 2005

2nd year 83%, or by June 30, 2006
3rd year 85% or by June 30, 2007
4th year 90% or by June 30, 2008
5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR – Item 23

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 95.52%

❖ Belief: People Need Family

- Outcome: The plan and services are developed by and include the family

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be
70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005
77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006
84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007
91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008
95% 5th year. Or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information is the Quality Service Peer Review (QSPR) item 18

2nd source - Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 62.01%

Protective Services

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - Maintain family unit safely

Objective 1: On-going assessment of risk is completed throughout the life of the case

- Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case.
- Task 2: Evaluation of the new risk assessment process will be conducted 1 year after implementation
- Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the evaluation.

Status: The agency has continued to work on the development of a revised family assessment and case-planning format to be operational through CHRIS. A system meeting SACWIS requirements has been developed and will be tested in July and implemented on September 30, 2006.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006

Objective 2: Family needs and strengths assessed and identified.

- Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case.
- Task 2: Utilizing the results of the QSPR, evaluate the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment and family involvement in the process.
- Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the evaluation.

Status: The family assessment and case plan format through CHRIS has been developed. It will be tested in July with implementation planned for September, 2006.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006

Objective 3: Parents and children are involved in the development of the case plan

- Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.3 of the PIP - Revise the case planning process, policies, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools to assure appropriate providers and family members are involved, including non-custodial parents where appropriate, and that case plans are developed to keep children safe and prevent removal.
- Task 2: Utilizing the results of the QSPR, evaluate the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment.
- Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the findings from the evaluation.

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 1, Action Step 1.2 In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case. Action Step 1.3 Revise the case planning process, policies, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools to assure appropriate providers and family members are involved, including non-custodial parents where appropriate, and that case plans are developed to keep children safe and prevent removal

STATUS: The agency has provided training to supervisors who monitor staffs' continual assessment of families. Supervisors are required to utilize the newly developed "Supervisory Review" Tool to assist their workers in providing services. Supervisors are able to address the overall progress of the families and offer input to staff. Supervisors are monitoring workers interaction with families during the development of the case plan. This activity will ensure families have input in the development of the case plan and that

the physical, medical, emotional, educational and social needs are met for the children being served.

The agency has continued to work on the development of a revised family assessment and case-planning format. A system meeting SACWIS requirements has been developed and will be tested in July and implemented on September 30, 2006.

The agency has piloted the family team meeting in Area II and the agency has applied for a grant to fund family team meeting in Arkansas.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006

Goal 2 - Determine effectiveness of services

Objective 1: Case plan is framed to meet the needs of the specific child and family members (including the physical, medical and emotional needs)

- Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.3 of the PIP - Revise the case planning process, policies, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools to assure appropriate providers and family members are involved, including non-custodial parents where appropriate, and that case plans are developed to keep children safe and prevent removal.
- Task 2: Utilizing the results of the QSPR, evaluate the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment.
- Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the findings from the evaluation.

STATUS: The agency has provided training to selected child welfare staff on the new assessment and case planning during PIP implementation. Concepts will be built into training for all staff as new assessment and case planning tools and processes are trained.

Completion of task by September 30, 2006

In-Home Support (by Social Service Aides)

❖ Belief: Every Child Matters

➤ Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First.

- Outcome: Children served are safe. No true reports of maltreatment received after supportive services (SS) given.

Reduction in the percent of children who are abused or neglected within one year of receiving supportive services. Current performance is 5%. Target performance is 3% by June 30, 2006

Source of Information – The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (71/05-5/31/06) is 4.97%

- Outcome: Children do not enter foster care.

% of children receiving SS services who entered foster care within one year of initiation of services performance is currently at 2%. The % of children entering foster care after receipt of these services will be reduced by 1% by June 30, 2006.

Source of Information – DCFS Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is .064%

❖ Belief: We have a responsibility to provide services that work.

➤ Specific Belief: Family Centered services are most effective

- Outcome: The plan and services are developed by and include the family.

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be
70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005
77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006
84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007
91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008
95% 5th year or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information is the Quality Service Peer Review (QSPR) item 18
2nd source - Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 62.01%

In-Home Support Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - The Division will develop a clear, consistent job description for the Social Service Aides (SSA's) and provide training and certification for improved skills to work with families.

Objective 1: Explore development of a career ladder for SSA's.

- Task 1: Develop proposal of a career ladder for SSA's. Completion by 07/01/07
- Task 2: Identify job specifications for the each recommended level of SSA's. Completion by 09/01/07
- Task 3: Submit changes to DCFS Executive staff and if necessary to DHS then OPM for changes. Completion by 12/30/07

Completion of tasks by June 30, 2008

Status: Committee was able to propose a couple of options. The Arkansas Legislature directed Office of Personnel Management to conduct a pay plan study which includes a review of all classification and positions in State Government. This is to be completed in October of this year and presented to Legislators during session that begins in January of 2007. All personnel actions, including for reclassifications are on hold until this study is completed and recommendations made. The recommendations and approval may establish a career ladder for this particular position or recommend position upgrade. The recommendation is to request a change and review this entire objective by June 2008 if the pay plan study has not achieved this objective, at that time, the committee would recommend available options for approval.

Objective 2: Establish a training and certification program for SSA's, which includes substance abuse training and include a plan for continuing education.

- Task 1: Identify areas of training needed for SSA's based on the career ladder. Completion by 07/01/07
- Task 2: Develop listing of competencies for SSAs. Completion by 07/01/07
- Task 3: Develop a training and certification program based on competencies for SSAs. Completion by 07/01/07
- Task 4: Implement and monitor tasks above. Completion by 07/01/07

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Status

The agency has certified designated SSA's to teach Active Parenting Education to families in group settings or one-on-one in the family's home. Training has been provided to Aides on Anger Management and continues to provide on an ongoing basis as needed. Aides are encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities planned by Staff Development and Mid-South Training Academy.

Objective 3: Explore with university partners options for SSA's to receive support to work on a Bachelor's level Social Work degree.

- Task 1: Develop program and policy for providing educational (BSW w/IV-E tuition currently UAF will provide) services for SSA's. Completion by 6/30/07
- Task 2: Implement an educational program for SSA's. Completion by 6/30/07
- Task 3: Monitor and report the numbers of staff completing the program. Completion by 6/30/07

Status

BSW/SSA policy has been written. UAF has developed some courses for on line classes which are pending approval from the Department of Education. The Human Diversity class has also been taped for on line production.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Goal 2 - Produce better timely, individualized services to clients and customers.

Objective 1 – Develop a screen in CHRIS for SSA's to document casework activity for monitoring purposes.

- Task 1: Ensure that there is a process in CHRIS for workers to document the referral of a case to an SSA staff person. Completion by 6/30/07
- Task 2: Referrals must be approved by the supervisor and incorporated into the case plan. Completion by 6/30/07
- Task 3: Review and update referral and CFS 322 Homemaker Referral form. Completion by 6/30/07

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Status: To be initiated for planning after September 2006 and completed by June 2007.

Staffing Goal

Goal# 1

Have sufficient qualified staff to insure child safety and families are served.

Objective # 1

Determine the number of staff that would be sufficient for the Division's county operations by June 30, 2007.

Task #1

COA/CWLA standards for staff ratio will be adopted by September 30, 2005.

Status: DHHS and DCFS finalized recommendations; currently a monthly report is produced that provides an analysis of caseloads of workers by county, area and statewide numbers.

Task # 2

All cases including primary Assignments and Secondary Assignments in all service areas will be designated a weight for purposes of determining caseload sizes by December 30, 2006.

Status: Current monthly report provides by area, county and worker the number of investigations, protective services, foster care children, supportive services and includes primary and secondary assignments.

Roundtable conducted and included Resource Workers and Area Managers; this group developed draft job description and suggested weights for these particular staff position. Recommendations for caseload and weights of Resource Workers cases have been provided to DCFS Director.

Task # 3

Determine current caseloads and projections of staff needed by county, area, and statewide totals by June 30, 2006.

Status: Current monthly report provides by area, county and worker the number of investigations, protective services, foster care children, supportive services and includes primary and secondary assignments.

Roundtable conducted and included Resource Workers and Area Managers and this group developed draft job description and suggested weights for these particular staff. Recommendations for caseload and weights of Resource Workers cases have been developed.

A report has been produced that provides an analysis of current case and projections needed by area and for the state for consideration in the next develop of the Division's budget.

Task # 4

Evaluate outcomes of the previous three tasks and use that information to assist in developing budget preparations and reports for management of staff by September 30, 2006

Task # 5

Request funding and positions for sufficient number of staff to adequately provide services to children and families served by November 30, 2006.

Note: A request for Transition Worker positions (5) have been submitted and were approved by the Deputy Director of DHHS.

A DHHS committee has been established to review and identify staffing needs, staffing status, caseloads, recruitment activities and hiring issues. This committee meets bimonthly in the Directors office.

A report has been produced that provides an analysis of current case and projections needed by area and for the state for consideration in the next develop of the Division's budget.

Objective # 2

Recruit Staff by June 30, 2007 and annually thereafter.

Task # 1

Review and modify the recruitment activities (Professional Development, Personnel, DCFS, and DHHS) by January, 2006.

Status: Need to meet and seek input on recruitment activities from the DHHS Personnel Unit. Several meetings and conference calls have been conducted to discuss recruitment events and coordinate activities. See attachment at the end of this Staffing report for a listing. The DHHS Personnel Unit also assists in providing a calendar of events that along with the recruitment staff from DHHS Personnel Unit and DCFS Community Services staff attend.

Task # 2

Identify areas where recruitment is an issue and develop specific recruitment needs, i.e. Spanish speaking workers, by June 30, 2006.

Status: Northwest Arkansas was identified as an area needing special recruitment emphasis. Special television ads were developed for Northwest Arkansas and a special entry rate was created for this area to entice interested applicants.

The Division created diverse job opportunities that will provide options to assist in staffing a county office, i.e. internship, co op positions and job share positions. Functional job duties for these positions were developed. Ten (10) Internship positions have been identified, Ten (10) Co Op positions have been identified and two (2) job share positions for Area 1 have been identified. Area Managers are currently interviewing possible candidates for the Intern and Co Op positions.

Community Services staff attend various universities, colleges, educational institutions and job fairs. Periodic reports are generated detailing results of the recent recruitment efforts and provided to the DHHS Committee. For the fall career events 30 people were interviewed; 15 internship and co op positions were hired and seven (7) December graduates were hired. From the spring career events 33 were interviewed, 16 were selected for family service worker positions, 4 applied for internship positions, and one will graduate in 8/06.

Task # 3

Schedule and attend university and college career days and job fairs to advertise, recruit and provide information about various job openings.

Status: Larry Stricklin provides the calendar, Rosemary White and Mr. Kindle schedule with field staff to attend these

Task # 4

Schedule and attend university and college classes, social work classes of those graduating to talk about the agency's mission, the various job openings and tasks, stipend student information, etc.

Status: See attachment of Career Day events for Spring of 2006 at the end of this work plan. There were many events attended by our field staff.

Task # 5 previously #3

Implement the plan (Personnel and Professional Development) by December 30, 2006.

Task #6 – previously #4

Implement the plan (Personnel and Professional Development) by December 30, 2006.

Status: Evaluate the plan to see if it meets DCFS needs and modify based on the results of the evaluation (Community Services and Community Support) by June 30, 2007.

Objective # 3

Address family service worker on-call issues by June 30, 2007.

Task # 1

Identify on-call options (Pulaski County On-Call work group) by December 1, 2005.

Status: Roundtable conference call was conducted November, 2005 with participation by Williams Toles, Rosemary White, Kim Alexander, Debbie Shiell, Megon Bush. Recommendations were submitted to the DCFS Director and some of the suggestions and enhancements to practice are being implemented at Pulaski.

Task # 2

Compile information and make recommendation by June, 2006.

Status: Ongoing. Need to develop policies and procedures to test out these in a large area, medium area and rural area.

Task # 3

Implement recommendations by December, 2006.

Status: Need to determine if tasks need to be included in agency policy.

Task # 4

Evaluate the implementation of recommendations and modify based on the results of the evaluation by June 30, 2007.

Objective 5:

Develop and implement BSW (SSA), MSW program for providing services to children and families by June 30, 2008.

Task# 1

Identify options and incentives to allow staff to complete course work for BSW and/or MSW (Professional Development) by April, 2006. This task is completed.

- BSW/SSA Policy has been written.
- UAF has developed HBSE I & II as on-line classes. They are now with DOE for their approval. The Human Diversity class has also been taped for on-line production.
- DCFS has had an MSW Educational leave Program implemented for over ten years.

Task# 2

Collaborate with the universities to develop policies and procedures for the above (Professional Development) by December, 2006.

- BSW/SSA Policy has been written.
- UAF has developed HBSE I & II as on-line classes. They are now with DOE for their approval. The Human Diversity class has also been taped for on-line production.

Status: Task complete

Task # 3

Implement the above and evaluate the tasks (Professional Development) by June 30, 2008.

Objective 6

Review and revise Supervisor Training Curriculum by June 30, 2009.

Task #1

Review the current supervisor's curriculum and identify needed topics that will cover evidence based on practice and clinical aspects of the job by June 30, 2006.

Status: Review current supervisor competencies, formal and functional job descriptions of unit and county supervisor positions. Several competencies were reworted, added competencies on CQI, MIS (report utilization) and Ethics.

Task #2

Review activities and learning materials from the Mentoring Supervisors project that should be a part of the supervisor training and staff development by June 30, 2006.

Task# 3

Review the revised supervisor job description to be developed through the Classification and Competency Study identify competencies related to job functions by October 31, 2006.

Task# 4

Develop a multi-tiered supervisor training plan and present to DCFS Executive Staff for approval by June 30, 2007.

Task# 5

Implement approved training plan by October 1, 2007.

Task# 6

Evaluate the training plan and modify the plan based on the results of the evaluation by June 30, 2009.

Note: Suggest the following objective be added:

Objective 7: Development of a comprehensive and inclusive retention plan by January 30, 2008

Task# 1:

Identification of key retention activities by December, 2006

Status: The Worker Recruitment and Retention Task Force will meet in July to review the status of their November, 2002 and determine what has been completed and what needs to be carried into the CFSP.

Task# 2:

Development of an ongoing personnel satisfaction survey that is separate from the existing exit interview in current policy. January 30, 2007

Status: A survey was developed in 2004. It has been resubmitted for review, consideration and approval.

Task# 3:

Focus group sessions conducted periodically in the different DCFS areas to identify strengths and ideas for improvement.

Status: Completed in Area VI – “short term Area VI – Pulaski Plan” was developed and recommendations completed as a result of this plan.

Completed in Area VII and report submitted January, 2006. Recommendations will be developed by March, 2006.

The Department of Health and Human Services conducted focus groups with all Divisions and Offices. A random selection of 473 names was pulled and 293 staff participated in 12 focus groups. Questions posed included; a) identify positive characteristics that should be evident in our culture if we want to be a high performance and high quality state agency; b)when you think about all levels of leaders/managers/supervisors in a high performance agency, what should our leaders start doing, stop doing, continue doing to build a high performance agency; c)identify a list of common problems or barriers that you have experienced at work that if changed, would make your job easier and; d)if you were the director of your division or DHHS and you could change one thing, what would you change. A survey has been developed which every employee has been asked to complete.

Task# 4:

Development of a Family Service Worker advisory group.

Status: A Worker Advisory Group facilitated by MidSOUTH Academy has been established in Area VI. This group meets monthly Thursday morning at 8:30

Task 5: Development of incentives separate from financial incentives. January 30, 2007

Status: Review the Worker Recruitment and Retention Task Force Recommendations submitted November, 2002 and determine what was completed and what needs to be carried into the CFSP. Establish a committee to identify incentives.

Listing of Career Day and Recruitment Events referenced in Objective 2 Task #4

Community Services Participation in Career Fairs and Recruitment Events conducted at various locations throughout the state.

Arkansas Tech University, Russellville

Information Session – November 17, 2005

Interviews Session - November 18, 2005

Staff Recruitment Event – March 15, 2006

Interview Session - March 16, 2006

Staff Recruitment Event – April 19, 2006

University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Information Session: November 17, 2005

Interview scheduled for November 18, 2005

Staff Recruitment Event – March 22, 23, 24, 2006

Central Arkansas Human Resources, Little Rock

Staff Recruitment Event – May 2, 2006

Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock

Staff Recruitment Events - May 2, 2006 and November 1, 2006

Arkansas State University, Jonesboro

Information Session – November 15, 2005

Interviews scheduled for November 16, 2005

Information Session---March 8, 2006

Staff Recruitment Event – April 11-12, 2006

Staff Recruitment Event – April 19, 2006

Harding University, Searcy

Staff Recruitment Event - March 30, 2006

Staff Recruitment Event – April 19, 2006

Philander Smith College, Little Rock

Interviews scheduled for November 15, 2005

Number of students to be interviewed: 3

Staff Recruitment Event – April 25, 2006

University of Arkansas at Fayetteville

Information Session – November 16, 2005

Interviews scheduled for November 17, 2005

Number of Students to be interviewed: 1

Information Session - March 29, 2006

Interview Session - March 30, 2006

Staff Recruitment Event - April 28, 2006

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Staff Recruitment Event – April 28, 2006

University of Arkansas at Fort Smith

Interviews scheduled for November 17, 2005

Number of Students to be interviewed: 5

Information Session March 9, 2006

SAU at Magnolia

Staff Recruitment Event - March 14, 2006

Henderson State University, Arkadelphia, AR

Staff Recruitment Event - March 15, 2006

UCA, Conway, AR

Exploring Your Career Field Day – April 7, 2006

U of A, Monticello, AR

April 19, 2006

Central Arkansas Human Resources, Little Rock, AR

May 2, 2006

Supportive Services

❖ Belief: Every Child Matters

➤ Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First.

- Outcome: Children served are safe. No true reports of maltreatment received after supportive services (SS) given.

Reduction in the percent of children who are abused or neglected within one year of receiving supportive services. Current performance is 5%. Target performance is 3% by June 30, 2009

Source of Information – The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is 4.97%

- Outcome: Children do not enter foster care.

% of children receiving SS services who entered foster care within one year of initiation of services performance is currently at 2%. The % of children entering foster care after receipt of these services will be reduced by 1% by June 30, 2009.

Source of Information – DCFS Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (7/1/05-5/31/06) is .064%

❖ Belief: We have a responsibility to provide services that work.

➤ Specific Belief: Family Centered services are most effective

- Outcome: The plan and services are developed by and include the family.

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be
70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005
77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006
84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007
91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008
95% 5th year or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information is the Quality Service Peer Review (QSPR) item 18

2nd source - Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review 97/1/05-5/31/06) is 62.01%

Supportive Services Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - Clearly identify supportive services

Objective 1: Develop services to Families in Need of Services (FINS) as a separate service, differentiated from Supportive Services. Clearly define which families and services are appropriate for supportive services.

- Task 1: Define supportive services. Completion by 6/30/06

Status: A definition was submitted for review, and suggestions from executive staff were made. The draft policy also was reviewed and commented upon by the DCFS Policy Review Team. The committee will reconvene to review the suggestions and to revise the supportive services policy to be resubmitted for review. The committee requests an extension of 06-30-06 to 12-30-06

- Task 2: Define and develop a system of services for FINS. Completion by 6/30/06

Status: There is a separate DHHS work group established to work on FINS policy and procedures. It is recommended that this task be deleted from this plan.

- Task 3: Define DCFS service population of FINS. Completion by 6/30/06

Status: There is a separate DHHS work group established to work on FINS policy and procedures. It is recommended that this task be deleted from this plan.

- Task 4: Determine policy based on completion of tasks 1 – 3. Completion by 12/30/06

Status: The committee will determine policy upon completion of Task 1 based on the request to delete Tasks 2 and 3. Task 4 will relate only to supportive services. The committee requests an extension of 06-30-06 to 12-30-06.

- Task 5: Implement the changes to policy, procedure and practice. Completion by 6/30/07

Status: The committee will implement the changes to policy, procedure and practice upon completion of Task 1 & 4 that relate only to supportive services. The committee requests an extension of 06-30-06 to 06-30-07.

Objective 2 – Educate community and courts on Supportive Services and Services to FINS.

- Task 1: Develop a brochure on the FINS services. Completion by 6/30/07

Status: the committee has requested that this Task be deleted along with the other Tasks concerning FINS

- Task 2: Review current brochure on DCFS services. Completion by 6/30/07

Status: the Committee will review the brochure for DCFS Supportive Services.

- Task 3: Develop training plan and train staff, providers and key stakeholders on FINS and supportive services. Completion by 6/30/07

Status: Based on the recommendation that FINS be deleted from this plan, the training will be developed for supportive services only.

- Task 4: Get agreement and buy-in to work with Administrative Offices of the Courts on training judges and juvenile staff regarding FINS and Supportive Services. Completion by 6/30/07

Status: The committee requests that this task be deleted with the other FINS related tasks.

- Task 5: Implement tasks 1 – 4. Delete Task 5

Objective 3 – Increase documentation of short-term supportive services to include enhancements to CHRIS

- Task 1: Based on definitional changes identify data needed from CHRIS. Completion by 6/30/07

Status: the committee will identify data needed from CHRIS based upon definitional changes to Supportive Services.

- Task 2: Identify changes needed in CHRIS. Completion by 6/30/08

Status: The committee will identify changes needed in CHRIS for Supportive Services.

- Task 3: Implement changes needed. Completion by 6/30/08

Status: The committee will implement changes.

- Task 4: Generate reports from CHRIS on FINS and Supportive Services cases. Completion by 6/30/08

Status: The committee requests that FINS reports be deleted from the CHRIS -generated reports.

- Task 5: Monitor the completion of the tasks. Completion by 6/30/08

Status: The committee will monitor the completion of tasks.

Goal 2 – Assess the outcome of services

Objective 1 – Families who have maltreatment episodes or whose children enter foster care after receiving supportive services will have those cases reviewed to determine why services did not prevent maltreatment and out-of-home placement. Utilize Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process to address findings.

- Task 1: Conduct a special study on Family Strengths and Needs Assessment and survey families about the impact of services. Completion by 6/30/08
- Task 2: Results of study will be a part of the CQI process Completion by 6/30/09
- Task 3: Outline recommendations and solutions Completion by 6/30/09
- Task 4: Implement changes if needed – report results. Completion by 6/30/09

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 1, Action Step 1.2 In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case.

Goal 3 – Assure that client needs are matched to services

Objective 1 – Provide resource directory for staff (online and ability to print)

- Task 1: Devise services log to record in-house and provider of services. Completion by 6/30/09
- Task 2: DCFS work on validating and updating eSources website. Completion by 6/30/09
- Task 3: Determine if eSources website meets needs of the field staff, make recommendations for changes. Completion by 6/30/09

Status: The committee discussed the eSources website. The committee will determine if the website meets the needs of the field staff, and make recommendations for changes.

Services log to record in-house and provider of services will be developed.

Objective 2 - Utilizing changes to assessment and case planning made through the Program Improvement Plan, document that client's needs are matched to the services.

- Task 1: PIP implementation of action step 1.2.2 and 1.3.1 is documenting client's needs are met. Completion by 6/30/09
- Task 2: QSPR and supervisory review tool results will be reviewed to determine that the needs of families are met. Completion by 6/30/09

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 2: Action Step 2.1 Review and prioritize service needs and contracts to existing budget allocations. Action Step 2.2 Expand current array of services and address service gaps, especially in rural areas, to meet the needs of children and families served by DCFS in order to protect children and prevent removal.

Service Descriptions: Status for 2006

The Division delivers services directly and purchases services from private and public agencies, universities and individuals, using state and federal funds. Programs and services of other Divisions within the Department of Human Services (DHS) are also available to clients of DCFS. Delivery of services is coordinated with other Divisions administering TEA/TANF Medicaid, Food Stamps, Social Services Block Grant and other federal entitlement programs.

DCFS continues to work with the state Community-based Child Abuse Prevention Program (CBCAP) State Lead Agency funded under Title II of CAPTA to develop child abuse prevention programs, in addition to the ones DCFS purchases.

DCFS staff provides child maltreatment investigations, assessment, case planning, referral and case management services. If a child cannot be maintained safely in their own home, DCFS will petition the court for custody and place the child in an approved foster home or licensed residential facility. The Division approves and supervises foster homes.

Direct services include the following:

Child Welfare Services is a broad category of services to children and their families and includes a variety of services described below, including Supportive Services, Child Protective Services, In-Home Support, Foster Care/Kinship Care Services, Independent Living services, and Adoption Promotion and Support.

Supportive Services - Voluntary services to families in need.

Child Protective Services - Child maltreatment investigations and protective interventions for children whose parents or legal guardians do not provide the care and protection needed for normal physical and emotional development and assistance to the parents or legal guardians to help them fulfill their parental roles.

In-Home Support – Social Service Aides provide support services to persons or families in their homes. Services are designed to provide children or adults with personal care needed to enable them to remain home and to prevent institutionalization or another form of out-of-home care. Social Service Aides also provide parent education.

Independent Living Services (direct service) - Each child in DHS custody, age fourteen or older, for whom the goal is not reunification shall be provided with instruction for development of basic life skills. Each child, age sixteen or older, shall be assessed every six (6) months to determine the progress in acquiring basic life skills. Services identified in the assessment to help the child achieve independence will be provided either directly or through contract. Each foster parent caring for, or interested in caring for, a child age fourteen or older, and each Family Service Worker responsible for any children, age fourteen or older, shall receive training in helping children acquire basic life skills.

The Independent Living grant program provides service to youth in foster care that are normally unavailable through other program funds such as Title IV-E-Foster Care. Services provided are primarily educational and are intended to keep youth in school while they obtain life skills that will assist them in transitioning to adulthood. The program coordinates age-appropriate life skills training for eligible youth who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18. It assists

with services and purchases that enable the youth to fulfill educational goals that may include high school graduation and post-secondary education. This includes college or university training, vocational training, and assistance in finding career and job opportunities. In addition, the program may assist emancipated youth that choose not to continue their education past high school to establish a residence. (Youth can be emancipated by court order only.) There are many levels of assistance and instruction available to youth who choose to participate in the program. All assistance and instruction should be provided in accordance with the child's case plan.

Foster / Kinship Care Services - The Division provides services to children whose biological parents cannot care for them, by providing a planned period of care by approved foster parents, including relatives who are approved as foster parents, and by planning for reunification or placement in another permanent living arrangement. Time-Limited Family Reunification services (described below) are part of the services delivered to children in foster care and their families.

Child Abuse Neglect/Prevention – The Division distributes materials throughout the State to field offices, schools, Family Resource Centers and medical facilities. These materials target the reduction/awareness of child abuse and neglect. Materials have the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline number printed on it.

DCFS Child Protective Services staff provides and facilitates training on Substance Abuse, Anger Management and Effective Parenting. Training is geared toward staff working directly with families, staff from Family Resource Centers and schools. The DCFS Director serves on the Arkansas Child Abuse Prevention Commission (ACAPC) which provides for increased coordination of efforts between the agencies, Executive Director of ACAPC, and also serves on the DCFS Advisory Committee.

The Family Resource Centers and our Human Service Workers in Schools are considered preventive programs due to the fact that families can receive assistance and not have a case in DCFS. In fact, the primary reason for these two services is to prevent the necessity of opening a case.

Intervention and Treatment - The Division offers several services to children and families. Intensive Family Services, Anger Management, Parenting Education, Interpreter Services, Psychological Evaluations, Drug Screenings, Assessments and Treatment (limited), Respite Care and Counseling are services offered to families to resolve issues that could cause removal of the child.

Purchased Services include the following:

- Statewide comprehensive medical examinations for foster children through a contract with the University of Arkansas Medical School's Department of Pediatrics.
- Assessment, diagnosis and therapy services for adolescent sexual offenders through a contract with the University of Arkansas Medical School's Department of Pediatrics
- Individual, family, and group therapy and various individual and group counseling services from private agencies, mental health associations, or private practitioners

throughout the state.

- Professional language interpreters statewide when serving families that do not speak English.
- Deaf interpretation services statewide for families with hearing disabilities.
- Services to disabled children.
- Emergency shelters for children and teens.
- Purchased services to children in the custody and care of DCFS include therapeutic foster home programs, psychiatric residential treatment, comprehensive residential treatment, residential treatment, respite care, health services, independent living
- Additional Adoption promotion and support services
- In-home consultation visits with prospective adoptive families
- Adoption home studies
- Adoption summaries on waiting children
- Non-identifying summaries on adoptees
- Adoption subsidies
- Adoption Registry services
- Respite care
- Therapeutic groups for foster and adopted teens
- Adoption and foster care recruitment activities
- Training for DCFS staff, adoptive parents, foster parents and adopted children
- Adoption support groups
- Lifebooks for children in foster care
- Adoption resource libraries

Promoting Safe and Stable Families:

Family Preservation Services (direct and contract services) - Services to preserve families and protect children encompass a comprehensive continuum of services designed to address the life needs of the child and the family. In addition to protective services, family preservation includes services to families needing assistance on a voluntary basis. Services are intended to protect children, to help parents in their child-rearing role, to strengthen family functioning, and to promote the healthy development and social functioning of children.

Family Support Services - (contract services) Intensive Family Services step-down programs, deaf and language interpretation services, and tutoring services. Contractors are selected through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The RFP requires that they be community-based.

Time-Limited Family Reunification (direct and contract services) - There are a limited number of situations when children cannot safely remain at home and must be separated from their family. The Division strives to preserve and strengthen the child's family ties when it is in the best interest of the child, and to protect the child by considering the child's health and safety as the paramount concern in determining whether or not to remove the child from the home. When a child must be separated from the family, DCFS will provide a healthy and safe environment and will make appropriate and timely efforts to provide services to reunite the family. DCFS

will provide appropriate homes for children who cannot be reunited with their families. Relatives of children placed in the custody of the Department shall be given preferential consideration for placement, if the relative caregiver meets all relevant child protection standards and it is in the child's best interest to be placed with the relative caregiver.

Services include the following: Intensive Family Services, purchase of plane tickets for reuniting children with their families for visits and returning home, substance abuse counseling, substance abuse treatment, day care, psychological evaluation services, drug screening. Intensive Family Services, Substance Abuse and Anger Management, Counseling, Drug Screenings and Treatment, along with the purchase of items to strengthen and promote safety of children are provided.

Adoption Promotion and Support Services (direct and contract services) - Services and activities designed to encourage adoptions of children in the foster care system when adoption is in the best interest of the child. These services include the following: in-home consultation with prospective adoptive families, adoption home studies, and adoption summaries on waiting children, non-identifying summaries on adoptees, adoption subsidies, adoption registry services, respite care, therapeutic groups for foster and adopted teens, adoption and foster care recruitment activities, adoption support groups, and lifebooks for children in foster care. DCFS also trains staff, adoptive parents, foster parents, and adopted children and maintains an adoption resource library.

Adoption service are designed to provide caring relationships in an adoptive family to children who are, or are expected to be, legally free for adoption and whose birth parents are unwilling or unable to appropriately care for them; and a coordinated set of services for the child, the child's birth parents, and adoptive applicants/parents.

An array of services may be purchased from a variety of organizations including child welfare agencies, private psychiatric hospitals, community-based agencies, universities, other state divisions, licensed individuals, and hospitals. Services range from prevention to adoption or other permanent living situations.

Collaboration:

The Division has collaborated with several stakeholders across the state in participating in planning and implementing the PIP and Strategic plans for Arkansas.

The DCFS Advisory Board meets quarterly and is comprised of judges, legislators, advocates, representatives from other DHHS divisions, University partners, the Administrative Office of the Courts, foster parents, providers, and foster youth. The Board reviews the progress of plans that are in place as well as any special reviews taking place, including status of PIP implementation, recruitment plans, and annual plans.

A Stakeholders meeting was held June 15, 2006 to specifically review progress of the 5 year plan and gather feedback comments. The partners that were initially involved in the development of the plan were invited back for this annual review.

The strategic plan committees have stakeholders that serve on their committees and are invited to their committee meetings to review progress, discuss and resolve barriers.

DCFS has a good partnership with the Court Improvement staff in the Administrative Office of the Courts, and have participated in meetings, training, and planning retreats based on the recommendations for the CIP survey conducted by CIP. The division plans to continue this collaboration in the future by ensuring that they are invited and participate in the Child and Family Services Reviews, program improvement plan follow ups. They continue to be invited to participate and give input on the DCFS Advisory Board. The AOC has plans to involve DCFS in their plans and implementation of the training and data technology grants.

The Administrative Office of the Courts is partnering with DCFS in regards to recruitment of foster and adoptive homes. They are providing promotional items such as posters and billboards as well as temporary staff for statewide inquiry calls.

Program Support

Training Plan – FY 2006 - 2009

Value Statement

The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) recognizes and values the dedication of all employees. DCFS goals of child protection and family preservation will only be achieved through the work of highly trained and motivated child welfare staff. We believe that the pursuit of excellence and achievement of Division goals outlined within the Belief Based Performance Management System requires the exposure of workers to new and innovative training material involving best practices in child welfare.

Purpose

This document is the training plan for all employees and volunteers within DCFS. The purpose of training within DCFS is to give staff and volunteers' skills they need to accomplish the agency mission.

Funding Authority

Authority for establishment of a Title IV-E training program and claiming reimbursement for such a program is cited at 45 FTR 1356.60(b).

DCFS Professional Development Unit (PDU)

The mission of the PDU is to support training activities in DCFS through monitoring of the Academic Partnership training contracts, processing of requests to attend workshops and conferences and reimbursement of training-related expenses of those individuals who serve IV-E children. The PDU is administratively located within the Legislative, Analysis, Research and Planning Unit (LARP) of DCFS.

Who Can Be Trained

Personnel employed in all classes of positions, volunteers and persons preparing for employment by DCFS may be trained and the cost of this training can be claimed for reimbursement under the IV-E program. This includes students preparing for employment in DCFS and DCFS child welfare staff seeking the Masters Degree in Social Work. Training may also be provided to current and prospective foster, kinship and adoptive parents and members of state licensed or approved child care institutions providing care to foster and adopted children receiving IV-E assistance.

Training Resources

Training is provided to DCFS staff and volunteers through contracts with the Academic Partnership, DCFS in-house providers, other state, local and federal resources, and private training providers. Although most training events take place within the state, there may be some critical training only available out of state. Training resources include Internet/Intranet sites, compressed interactive video training events (CIV), and lending resource libraries maintained by the Academic Partnership sites. Depending upon training media selected, training sites may include:

- MidSOUTH Training Center sites in Fayetteville, Jonesboro, Arkadelphia, Monticello, and in Little Rock, AR
- Arkansas Academic Partnership University/College sites (7)
- Seventy-five County Offices housing DCFS staff
- Contracted third-party training sites, such as hotels, conference centers, or municipal or other state facilities

University Partnerships

To optimally utilize IV-E training and administrative funding, the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has developed partnerships resulting in two contracts with institutions of higher education: the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) MidSOUTH Center and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF). The latter subcontracts with the following to form the Arkansas Academic Partnership:

University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, University of Arkansas at Monticello, Arkansas State University, Harding University, Arkansas Technical University, Philander Smith College, and Southern Arkansas University. These contractors have been enlisted to educate and train DCFS staff, potential staff, and foster parents and to perform defined administrative activities. The education, training and administrative activities are described in contracts developed between the agencies. Performance indicators contained in those contracts describe specific expectations of the contractors.

Allowable costs to be considered for Title IV-E funding (federal or match) include the following:

- State general revenues that are being used to fund salaries and fringe of faculty and support staff involved in programs that prepare students for employment with the state child welfare agency and directly relate to/support the contract deliverables. For degree programs that are accepted by the state agency as qualifications for Family Service Workers, any course required to get the degree as reflected in the catalog and any elective that specifically relates to IV-E could be included. Those degree programs must include persons preparing for employment with the state agency (i.e., receiving stipends.)
- Other university support departments who jointly support the deliverables of the agency who are excluded from indirect costs are also allowable.

- The university's federally approved indirect cost rate. The university should include a copy of the letter from the appropriate Federal agency that approves their indirect cost rate.

The statewide collaboration among DCFS and nine Arkansas universities focuses on education and training to support and improve child welfare practice. The partnership objectives are to develop a family-centered child welfare curriculum and infuse it into interdisciplinary academic curricula statewide; to recruit and prepare university/college students for employment in the child welfare system administered by DCFS; and to better prepare child welfare workers and supervisory staff through state-of-the-art pre-service training and continuing education.

The University of Arkansas at Little Rock MidSOUTH Center works collaboratively with DCFS and the partnership coordinated by University of Arkansas at Fayetteville to coordinate its training activities. The MidSOUTH Training Academy operates five training centers for the purpose of providing classroom training and education for DCFS staff on a statewide basis. MidSOUTH offers the following unique classroom training and education activities:

- Pre-service training for all newly hired FSW trainees
- Leadership training
- Social Service Aide (SSA) training
- Training of Hotline Operators of the Arkansas State Police (ASP)
- Continuing education for DCFS staff, foster parents and closely allied provider staff

MidSOUTH also provides initial training to all DCFS-referred foster parents and adoptive parents including, but not limited to, Foster PRIDE / Adopt PRIDE (**P**arent's **R**esource for **I**nformation, **D**evelopment, and **E**ducation), developed by Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), as approved by DCFS Executive Staff.

MidSOUTH continuing education events are published on-line monthly and held at sites determined by required technology and targeted trainee population. Training topics are based on specific needs determined by DCFS Executive Staff and the Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) tool.

The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF) works cooperatively with DCFS and the UALR to coordinate its training activities. UAF subcontracts with seven (7) other universities for the purpose of providing statewide training and education services under overall DCFS contract. Additional responsibilities of the collective Arkansas Academic Partnership include:

- Employing field instructors for the purpose of mentoring new workers during their first year of employment
- Providing advanced practice education when requested. Additional curriculum may be developed and presented at the request of DCFS Area Managers or Executive Staff. Core-training topics are standardized for consistency of presentation throughout the Partnership
- Maintaining a child welfare resource center at each university site to allow DCFS staff the opportunity to review and check out materials and resources. An on-line listing is

provided of all available materials. Developing a cooperative effort to provide training for new Partnership new field education staff and refresher training for incumbent field instructors.

- Recruiting either BSW or selected multi-disciplinary degree candidates in their senior year of college, to accept a two-semester stipend in exchange for a one year work obligation with DCFS upon graduation.

Immediately upon employment, every Family Service Worker Trainee (FSWT) will be assigned a Field Instructor from one of the contracted Universities/Colleges within the Academic Partnership. The Field Instructors will provide further orientation, guidance, mentoring, skill demonstration and a knowledge base to all FSWT's during the first year of their employment to assist the new worker in adapting to their new positions and responsibilities. This mentoring will assist the FSWT in passing their panel review, which is usually held after the first 5 months of employment. The panel review is a process involving a representative body of DCFS Area field administrative staff, appointed by the Area Manager that meets prior to the 6th month of FSWT employment, to review the work and knowledge of the FSWT.

Current Training

With the exception of the available "part-time" DCFS MSW Educational Leave program, all training offered within DCFS is considered "full-time," in that employees are relieved of all responsibilities for performance of current work when participating in a DCFS-sponsored training event. The IV-E definition of "long-term training" of events eight or more weeks in length, applies to New Worker Training, the MSW Educational Leave Program, and the senior year undergraduate educational assistance program.

Orientation –The purpose of the orientation process is to provide information to the participant concerning the program in which they are involved. Items covered(syllabus) include DCFS policies and procedures, guidelines, timeframes, structure and nature of work and responsibilities, required paperwork and expected behaviors including ethical behavior, confidentiality, legal rights of clients that we work with, and continuous quality improvement processes. Orientations have been developed for all staff within DCFS and for foster parents.

The following orientation processes and forms are available for new employees and volunteers:

- All DCFS Employees (program and non-program employees). Each hiring supervisor must complete and submit to DHHS/DCFS Personnel the following orientation processes within 30 work days (Short term)of the date of hire:

DHHS 1101-New Employee Orientation Checklist

DCFS CFS-1136 New Employee Orientation Checklist Addendum

Additional program new worker orientation and on-the-job training is included within DCFS New Worker Training (NWT) provided by MidSOUTH Training Academy.

- All foster and kinship parents, upon completion of their mandated pre-service and approval as a foster or kinship home, will be provided with an orientation provided by DCFS staff, using the following approved form:

CFS – 465 DCFS Foster Parent Orientation Checklist

Additional foster/kinship parent orientation is included in the foster/kinship parent pre-service training.

- Provisional Relative Foster Homes may have a child placed before being licensed, but all licensing requirements are to be met within 6 months of placement. This orientation form must be completed and signed by the family before the child is left in the home:

CFS – 474 Provisional Foster Home Orientation Checklists

- Volunteers, not providing foster or adoptive services to the agency, are covered by DHHS Policy 1027.

All orientation training is to be completed within 30 days and is considered short term training. The training generally takes 3-6 hours to complete. The Administrative functions supported include referral to services and case management. The settings a part of initial in-service and provided by in house agency staff. The audience is new employees and new approved foster parents and/or volunteers. The average number of expected participants is 1206.

New Worker Training

All pre-service NWT for program staff has been approved by the DCFS Executive Staff and is provided by UALR MidSOUTH Training Academy. The curriculum is based upon worker competencies developed by the Institute for Human Services (IHS). New FSW trainees are scheduled within the first two weeks of employment. Classes are delivered by university staff through one of five sites throughout the state to allow the new worker closer access to both their office and home. Due to the intensity of the NWT and assigned on-the-job training requirements and responsibilities, the FSWT shall carry a maximum workload of five (5) secondary cases. The overall training event provides classroom lecture, activities, discussion, training strategies involving all learning styles, and on-the-job field training for skill development. Both pre-and post-testing is used for each module and for the course as a whole.

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

- **FSWT New Staff Training** is competency-based training for newly hired family service workers consisting of twenty-two days (132 hours) of classroom instruction, conducted over a ten week period. The training is preceded by a one week in-office orientation phase and interspersed with field instruction and standardized on the job training

activities while not in the classroom. Classroom instruction consists of training in(syllabus) *Family Centered Practice* (to include cultural diversity), *Dynamics of Maltreatment*, *Effects of Abuse on Human Development*, *Casework Communications*, *Effects of Separation and Placement*, *Child Maltreatment Assessment*, *Foster Care – Out-of-Home Placements*, and *Case Management – Assessment, Planning, & Coordinating Efforts*. In the past year, fifteen FSW new staff training events were conducted involving 188 participants. This classroom training is provided at one of the five MidSOUTH Training Academy locations throughout the state. The administrative functions for this training includes IV-E eligibility determination or re determination, referral to services, development and maintained of case plan, and case management. Setting/venue is initial in services, long term training as it is over a period of 10weeks or 132 hours. The provider is MidSouth (contract provider). The audience is for new family service workers and supervisors (who are new to the Division). Average number of expected participants is 188.

Continuing Education Training-

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

Continuing Education training offers a variety of training sessions for foster/adoptive parents and staff based upon information and needs gained through Individual Training Needs Assessments, Council on Accreditation requirements, Program Improvement Plan mandates, Legislative requirements, and DHHS/DCFS Executive Staff directives. Training is developed and scheduled as needed. These classroom training activities may be held at any of the partnership university sites, or other public or private facilities in the state. (syllabus) Training topics include but are not limited to: worker safety, grief and loss, ethics, parenting, substance abuse, effects of child abuse/neglect, mandated reporting, working with sexually abused children, time management, stress management, case planning, risk assessment, interviewing young children, ICPC policy,

The Administrative functions supported are: referral to services, placement of child, development and maintenance of case plan.

Venue/setting is continuing in-service training and the providers are MidSouth (contractor), in house agency staff, and public University. The course is short term and range from 3-6 hours. The audience is staff, volunteers, foster parents, adoptive parents, and community providers. The combined average number (may include multiple participation) of expected participants for continuing education courses is 3672.

These events may be directly provided by or through Academic Partnership or DCFS staff, contracted or community providers, and may either be mandated or elective. These classes are open to all DCFS staff, foster / adoptive parents, and childcare agencies receiving IV-E assistance, unless the nature of the training class targets a specific work group within DCFS or if considered inappropriate due to confidentiality issues. Additional training may be provided through third-party vendors, and may be attended through formal application and registration

procedures. These formal training events are usually three to six hours in length, but may extend to three days, depending upon topic.

Central Office Staff Training

Each hiring supervisor shall review a new employee's training experience to determine whether specific information may be gained through training events designed to enhance knowledge or performance with the employee's job function. Both incumbent and new employees shall be evaluated through the annual PPES / CLIP process and training issues may be addressed through development of a staff training plan to target job tasks requiring improvement or enhancement. Management position orientation, for those new employees with no prior supervisory experience in DCFS, may include attendance in selected modules of New Worker Training provided by MidSOUTH. These formal training events are usually one to two days in length, depending upon topic. Informal training activities, not held in a scheduled classroom environment may last only a few hours in duration.

DCFS Central Office employees shall be permitted to attend training found applicable to their job performance. Supervisors may use formal training events, as well as media such as videotape, CD, DVD, printed material or through interview/shadowing of a topic expert. (Syllabus) Training may include but not limited to: computer programs such as excel, access; stress management; any MidSouth continuing education course listed above) that would be relevant to job function, ethics. The administrative functions supported referral to services. The setting/venue is continuing in-service provided by MidSouth (contractor) and/or in house agency staff, and public university. It is considered short term and ranges from 3-6 hours. The audience is staff out of Central office, but may include other divisional staff and volunteers. Average number of participants expected is 20.

Social Service Aides (SSA) –

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

- **Social Service Aide Training** is a knowledge/skill based training for Social Service Aides consisting of Short term training of twelve days (72 hours) of classroom instruction, conducted over a four week period. This is considered Initial In-Service and can be provided as continuing in service. (Syllabus) Training topics address several skills areas-introduction/overview of DCFS; family centered services; communications; engaging families; child development; child health issues; substance abuse training; time management; stress management; documentation; team building; physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse; legal issues; including a two-day segment on Active Parenting Leader training. The administrative functions supported are referral to services, preparation for and participation in judicial determinations, placement of child, and maintenance of case plan. In the past year three Social Service Aide training events were conducted involving 34 participants. This included new SSAII as well as some designated existing SSAII as referred by supervisor. This classroom training is offered

only at the Little Rock MidSOUTH Training Academy and provided by MidSouth trainers (contractors). The average number of participants expected is 34.

Additional continuing education training sessions are offered to the Social Service Aide staff as requested or mandated.

Adoptions Staff-Short Term training

Eleven orientation sessions for Adoption Specialists were held during 2005-2006. DCFS Adoptions staff and MidSOUTH Training Academy curriculum development staff are working together to develop a standardized curriculum for the orientation process for Adoption Specialist. This orientation will be curriculum available through classroom and online training. Curriculum is also being developed to provide new workers with information concerning the adoptions process. Adoption Specialists also participated in their Area Foster Parent Conference training sessions. The Adoption Unit also assisted in the planning and coordination of the Statewide Adoptions Conference held November 2005. Adoptions staff will attend continuing education training as identified by supervisory staff.

This short term training consists of session that from 3-6 hours per day for a total of average 32 hours and includes topics (syllabus) such as DCFS policy on adoptions; recruitment and retention of adoptive applicants; applications of adoptive applicants; development of adoptive placement; re-evaluation of adoptive homes; selections of adoptive placement including disclosure, pre placement and placement activities; post adoptive services; disruption of adoptive placement; completing adoptive home studies; subsidy. The average number of participants expected is 10. The administrative functions supported would be referral to services, placement of child, development and maintenance of case plan.

Independent Living (IL) Coordinators-

Monthly meetings (sometimes phone conferences) have been held for IL Coordinators and used as a forum for providing training in policy and methods. The IL Unit coordinated the statewide Transition to Adulthood Conference, held August 2005. This conference provided training for 217 stakeholders, DCFS staff and judicial participants.

The Independent Living Unit and MidSOUTH have discussed additional training specifically targeted for the IL Coordinators. Independent Living Coordinators will attend continuing education training as identified by supervisory staff. The Independent Living Unit had requested DCFS approval for attendance in a national-level IL conference to increase their level of knowledge of current issues in IL. The Independent Living Coordinator positions are the FSW and/or SSAII and this training is a part of the new worker and SSAII training reported elsewhere in this report. There is a plan for identified independent living to be developed and offered that separate from the CORE training. It would be continuing education exclusively for the Independent Living Coordinator. This was effective 1/1/07. The average number of expected participants is 20. The duration of this training is 3 hours. (short term) The administrative functions supported would be referral to services, placement of child, development and maintenance of case plan.

Training for Foster / Adoptive / Relative Foster / Provisional Relative Foster Homes –These homes include the following: Foster Family Home (Non Relative); Adoptive Home; Relative Foster Home (Kinship Only); Relative Foster Home (Fostering and Kinship); and Provisional Relative Foster Home.

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

Foster/Adopt PRIDE is a competency-based, pre-service training provided for prospective foster/adoptive parents. The Foster/Adopt **PRIDE** (Parents' Resource for Information, Development, and Education) training curriculum was developed by the Child Welfare League of America and consists of nine, three hour modules totaling 27 hours of instruction. In the past year, fifty-five Foster/Adopt PRIDE training events were conducted for 948 persons. This classroom training is offered throughout the state as determined by the geographic concentration of DCFS referrals to MidSOUTH. Sessions may be held in community centers, State Offices, churches, or other public or private facilities.

Prior to final home approval, these volunteers are required to complete the thirty hour DCFS pre-service training curriculum. DCFS staff will provide a formal orientation by completion of the CFS-465 (Foster Parent Orientation Checklist) at the end of the training course. Provisional Relative Foster Homes are required to complete the training required to meet standards within 6 months of the immediate placement of the child in their home.

This training includes (syllabus) making connections; creating teams; meeting development needs-attachments; Loss; Discipline; Strengthening family relationships; continuing family relationships; planning for change; making an informed decision; and taking pride. The administrative function supported is referral to services; placement of child; maintenance of case plan; recruitment/licensing of foster/adoptive homes and institutions. The setting is Pre Services. This is for foster parents and adoptive parents who are not employees of the State and will not be. The training is provided by MidSouth (contract) or in some instances in house staff. It is short term training as it consists of one 3-6 hours day per week training for a total of 27 hours of training. The audience is volunteers, foster parents, adoptive parents, and designated child placement staff. The average number of participants expected is 948.

All foster and adoptive parents (as identified above) are required to attend and be certified in first aid and CPR. All homes are required to complete and maintain certification in first aid, but only foster family (non-relative) homes are required to attend and maintain full certification covering infant-child-adult CPR. Other homes, if only accepting fostering of relatives, will only be required to complete and maintain certification in the age level appropriate CPR as follows: infant (birth through 1 year of age); child (1 year through 8 years of age); and adult (age 8 years of age through adulthood). Acceptable national training providers include the following: American Red Cross (first aid and CPR); American Heart Association (first aid and CPR); or National Safety Council (Standard/Basic First Aid only). Foster parents must maintain certification in CPR and first aid to remain a DCFS foster home. Since various certification time frame durations occur with the acceptable CPR provider group (1 or 2 years), the foster parent

must adhere to and be responsible for maintaining their certification requirements. DCFS is responsible for scheduling first aid and CPR training for these homes and foster / adoptive homes will be reimbursed for successful completion of classes scheduled through DCFS using in-house or approved training providers. The average expected participants in this training are 1206. Administrative functions supported would be placement of child and development and maintenance of case plan.

Additional training for these homes is available through continuing education classes provided statewide by the University Partnership as well as the Area Foster Parent Conference and the State Annual Foster Parent Conference. Applications to attend training are processed and scheduled through local DCFS foster / adoptive parent liaison. DCFS bears the expense for DHHS foster /adoptive parents in attending classes to meet annual hourly training requirements, as scheduled through DCFS.

Volunteer Training

Training for volunteers, other than foster/kinship/adoptive volunteers, will consist of any additional training required to complete their volunteer responsibility.

The training topics (syllabus) may include but is not limited to a range from orientation of policy and procedures for transportation, to stress management, ethics, supervision of visits, recruitment of foster parents and adoptive parents. The administrative function supported is referral to services, and recruitment/licensing of foster/adoptive homes. The setting is pre services (orientation for volunteers not employed). In house agency staff usually provides this training although MidSouth (contract) does provide some. The training is considered short term as usually is 3 to 6 hours training over 1 to 2 days. It may be offered or conducted throughout the year as new volunteers apply. The average number of participants expected is 5.

Additional Training Opportunities/

Additional training opportunities for DCFS employees and foster parents may include attendance in training events offered through third-party vendors and conferences. Regular training conferences include Arkansas Human Services Employees Conference (AHSEA), MidSOUTH Summer School (MSSS), DCFS Area Training Meetings, Regional Training Conferences provided through the Academic Partnership, Mental Health Institute, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Annual Conference, and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Conference held by the Division of Youth Services. Several of the larger state conferences provide a limited number of scholarships for DCFS staff and foster parents. The average expected attendance at these conferences combined is 185. This is determined by budget and staff availability. These conferences would support at least one of the following administrative functions: referral to services, preparation for and participation in judicial determinations, placement of child, development and maintenance of case plan, case management, recruitment/licensing of foster/adoptive homes and institutions. The venue is continuing in

service and conference/workshop. The proposed provider may include in house agency training staff, public university, or MidSouth (contract) and Juvenile Justice.

Independent Study

Additional available training may include video or audio based instruction, online training opportunities as well as DCFS or Partnership library instructional materials and books. These trainings include child welfare subjects. The administrative functions supported would be placement of child and case management. The audience is for DCFS staff, university students, foster and adoptive parents, as well as community partners. The venue/setting is continuing in service and is provided by the public university and MidSouth (contract). It is short term training that foster parents are allowed to have 5 hours per year. The average expected participants are 35.

Supervisory Training Requirements-

All DCFS supervisors are required to attend the following training events provided by the Department of Human Services (DHHS) and DCFS:

Syllabus:

- DHHS 3-Day Supervisor Training (with update training every 5 years) includes PPES, Administrative Policy, and EEO Laws. Hiring Procedures and Grievances.
- DHHS Interpersonal Communications (2-day class)
- DHHS Basic Supervision (2-day class)-which includes communication, leadership, delegation, motivation, conflict managements and problem solving.
- DCFS New Supervisor Training (9-day class)

Upon employment as a supervisor, the employee will be contacted by DHHS Staff Development and informed of their required attendance in the mandated supervisor training held in Little Rock. The supervisor training provided through DHHS must precede all DCFS New Supervisor Training provided through UALR. Upon receipt of a copy of the DHHS-1161 form from PDU, MidSOUTH Training Academy will contact the new DCFS supervisor to inform them of the schedule to attend the DCFS New Supervisor Training. Supervisors may also attend the Certified Public Manager course, with approval of the DCFS Executive Staffs. Additional elective or mandated training may be scheduled for the targeted supervisor within DCFS.

DCFS Supervisors with any break in employment or supervisory responsibility must re-attend all seven days of the DHHS Supervisor Training requirements. Re-attendance in DCFS Supervisor Training is only required after one year break of employment, unless DCFS Executive Staff determine otherwise.

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

- **Supervisor/Leadership Training** is a competency-based training for new FSW supervisors and program managers consisting of nine days (51 hours) of classroom instruction, conducted over a three week period. The training also includes a series of on-

line tutorials to be completed outside the classroom and purposeful interaction with a field instructor/mentor. Classroom instruction is provided in three segments - *Principles of Leadership*, *Working with Others*, and *Nuts and Bolts of Supervision*. In the past year, three Supervisor/Leadership training events were conducted for 36 supervisors/program managers. This classroom training is offered only at the Little Rock MidSOUTH Training Academy.

Administrative functions supported are hearings and appeals, referral to services, case management. The setting/venue is Initial in-services and continuing training. Training is provided by in house agency training staff and MidSouth (contract). This is short term training that is covered over a 6 month to 1 year time frame and then updated every 5 years over a period of 3 days. The total hours average 93 hours. The audience is staff of State/local agency administering the State Plan. The average number of participants expected is 36.

Training Needs Assessments

The purpose of conducting a staff training needs assessment is to identify the training needs of an employee or volunteer and use this information to develop continuing education training events and county/area/state annual training plans. The assessment is only valuable if it results in training that is relevant, significant and available to the person.

DCFS provides three dedicated Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) tools, two for program staff (e.g., FSW, FSW supervisor), and one for foster parents.

DCFS Central Office Staff

On an annual basis, as specified in DHHS Policy, each DCFS Supervisor will conduct a performance evaluation, which will include a review of training needs for the work unit employee(s). The resulting training needs may be addressed in the Career Ladder Incentive Program (CLIP) training/education plan or managed apart from this formal process.

DCFS Program Staff

At the time designated for the employee's annual performance evaluation (PPES), DCFS Supervisors will complete an Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) for each Program employee and forward a copy to UALR MidSOUTH who will collect and report to the PDU all ITNA information for DCFS FSWs, and supervisors. ITNA criteria for FSW and supervisor positions are based upon standards provided by the Institutes for Human Services (IHS). A training plan developed by DCFS Supervisory staff with their employees to meet the needs expressed by their ITNA may be applied to the worker's CLIP training/education plan.

Foster / Adoptive Home

At the time of the foster parent's annual evaluation, the foster parent evaluator (i.e., contractor or agency employee) will conduct an ITNA with the foster parents and will forward a copy of the results to UALR MidSOUTH who will collect and report to the PDU all ITNA information relating to foster parents. The foster parent ITNA is based on ten competencies developed by the authors of the mandated preservice curriculum. The DCFS Adoptions Specialist assigned to the adoptive family will meet to determine and address training needs after Foster Pride / Adopt Pride Training, and will continue until the adoptive home is approved.

DCFS Supervisory staff and Foster Parent Liaisons are to review identified needs through the respective ITNAs and schedule attendance in needed training activities.

DCFS Financial Assistance for Education

Two programs are available under DCFS Policy XI-A, DCFS Educational Leave and Educational Assistance, to encourage and assist employees in achievement of an academic degree benefiting the Division. The policy addresses the types of leave and assistance available, the application and selection processes and criteria, related personnel and contract processes, and participant benefits and responsibilities under the program. In administering the DCFS Educational Leave and Educational Assistance Program, DCFS will comply with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act. The program will be administered without regard to age, religion, disability, political affiliation, veteran status, sex, race, color, or national origin. The DCFS PDU conducts monitoring of the programs.

Recipients of financial support for either program are contractually obligated to commit to employment in a direct service position for a specified period of time within DCFS. Should the participant default on the repayment of field service to DCFS through either refusal to maintain state employment or inability to remain otherwise employable during the contract repayment period, the participant shall repay the full or prorated expense within the originally established repayment timeframe.

Master of Social Work (MSW) Educational Leave Program

The purpose of the DCFS MSW Education Leave Program is to enable the Division to employ an increased number of persons who possess the MSW degree to work in programs throughout the state that serve Title IV-E children. DCFS Policy No. XI-B establishes guidelines for administering the DCFS MSW Educational Leave Program, and addresses both full and part-time agreements. Candidates must first gain acceptance from an Arkansas MSW Graduate Program before the application is considered within DCFS and the applicant must be a current employee for two years immediately prior to the initiation of the application process. Policy and the agreement mandate a 2-for-1-employment repayment.

Senior Year Stipend Program

The purpose of the DCFS Child Welfare Student Stipend Program is to hire more employees with degrees in social work and limited social work-related degrees on a

statewide basis to work in DCFS programs serving Title IV-E eligible children. DCFS Policy No. XI-C establishes guidelines for administering the DCFS Child Welfare Student Stipend Program.

University student stipend applicants follow their respective university application process and undergo the interview process with the University IV-E Coordinator for acceptance into the university stipend program. Applications and other related paperwork are submitted to the DCFS PDU for review and processing. Upon timely submission and completion of all policy-mandated forms, drug testing, and histories (i.e., criminal background, driving record, Central Registry, drug tests) are returned, the application packet is forwarded to the Division Director for disposition. If approved, stipends are awarded for two semesters of the applicant's senior year. Upon graduation, the student is employed by the Division and must remain employed for a minimum of one year, as a condition of the stipend agreement.

Acceptable degrees for stipend applicants are identical to the minimum qualifications for employment as a DCFS Family Service Worker, which are the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in social work, sociology, psychology or a related field. Related fields are identified as:

- ✓ Child and Family Development
- ✓ Child Development
- ✓ Counseling (any field of Counseling)
- ✓ Family Development
- ✓ Family Services
- ✓ Human Development and Family Studies
- ✓ Human Services
- ✓ Rehabilitation Science
- ✓ Social Welfare
- ✓ Behavior Science
- ✓ Criminal Justice
- ✓ Education (Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle Level, Secondary, and Special Education)
- ✓ Home Economics/Family and Consumer Science

Training Requirements for Licensure or Certification

Employees possessing national or state certification or licensure determined by the DCFS Executive Staff to be essential for the mission of the agency shall be permitted time to obtain training credit hours to maintain such certification. These licenses or certifications may include, but are not limited to, Licensed Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors, and Nursing. These licenses are regulated by State licensing boards, and employees must be using their license in a job-related capacity. Holders of these or other approved licenses/certifications will be permitted to apply and attend classes/training events for the purpose of gaining sufficient knowledge and training hours to maintain their license/certification. Approvals by Executive Staff of the status of the employee's need for certification will allow future training applications to be processed through normal channels of approval. All attendance will be subject to availability and budget restrictions. These targeted training events will be considered a priority in

scheduling training for the employee and would be scheduled before other non-credentialing training attendance.

Credit/Exemption for Prior Training

Employees are required to attend classes for which it has been determined that their attendance is mandatory. If the employee or supervisor believes an exemption from training is justifiable, based on completion of previous training and demonstrated competency, then a memorandum requesting exemption is passed through the supervisory chain to the DCFS Executive Staff. Either the employee or the supervisor may generate the request. Exemption will not be granted solely on the basis of academic degree.

For the request to be considered, the employee's supervisor must also approve the request, and attach details of the previous attendance, date and time of the training, examples of superior knowledge, documentation of demonstrated skills within the workplace, copies of the training material from the attended training, and verifiable copy of the training certificate or letter of attendance. After review of the documents, the DCFS Executive Staff will notify the supervisor of their decision.

Actual credit hours will not be awarded to an employee who is exempted from a mandated training topic. If, after granting an exemption for a class, the employee's skills are viewed as unacceptable in the knowledge/performance area, the employee will be required to attend the class for which exemption was awarded to ensure that the knowledge base is present. Credit hours would then be awarded for completion of the attended training event.

Training Topics and Resources

Training topics are determined by federal mandates, Council on Accreditation (COA) requirements, Program Improvement Plan (PIP) mandates, Arkansas legislation, DHHS and DCFS policy/procedure, individual supervisory-administered needs assessments and performance reviews, and approved employee-expressed need gained through the ITNA or written / verbal requests. Additional needs may be identified by the DCFS Executive Staff or through the use of general Division-wide assessment instrument on an annual basis. All training topics are reviewed and approved by the DCFS Executive Staff on an annual basis.

Training Records and Attendance Documentation

All participation by DCFS staff and volunteers in Academic Partnership-sponsored training events will be recorded within a training database maintained by the sponsoring institution. UAF is responsible for gathering attendance information from their seven subcontracted university training providers and for maintaining a centralized training records database. All Partnership training records will be exported monthly to the DCFS **CH**ildren's **R**eporting and **I**nformation **S**ystem (CHRIS). DCFS staff with a "supervisor" level of security may view and print employee training records from the CHRIS system.

Central Office supervisory staff and Area Managers (or designees) will initiate and maintain a CFS-381 Employee Training Record for all employees. Supervisors will enter all attended

training on the form and include copies of attendance verification within the folder. Area Managers (or designee) will enter all non-Partnership training attendance into CHRIS through the Training Toolbar function. Central Office supervisors (or designee) will likewise enter their employee's non-Partnership training into the CHRIS training database.

Both MidSOUTH Center and the Academic Partnership will provide documentation of training attendance to participants in the form of certificate, copy of sign-in sheet or letter of attendance. Information contained in these proofs of attendance shall have information concerning the training event identical to information areas found on the CFS-476 DCFS Training Certificate. In submitting forms for travel/expense reimbursement, DCFS participants shall attach verification of training attendance to the DHS TR1 Form. Attendance in training events, other than the University Partnership providers, participants shall obtain some form of attendance verification for their training records and expense reimbursement. Training provided in-house may be recorded on the CFS-476 and given to participants for their use.

Training Reports

Both MidSOUTH and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, representing the Arkansas Academic Partnership, will submit reports of compliance with training contract performance indicators required monthly to the IV-E Training Coordinator in the DCFS PDU for compliance review.

Training Announcements and Registration

Training announcements and schedules provided by the Academic Partnership are found on their respective websites:

UALR MidSOUTH – <http://www.midsouth.ualr.edu/>

UAF Partnership - <http://www.uark.edu/depts/scwk/partnership/index.html>

Additional training notifications will be made through intranet announcements to targeted DCFS employees.

All DCFS staff must complete a CFS-360 Request for Conference/Training application to attend an “elective” training event whether or not an expense is involved, but if the training is deemed mandatory, staff are not required to submit a CFS-360. Registration forms required by the sponsoring training event will also be completed and attached to the CFS-360.

Annual Review of the Training Plan

The Professional Development Team (PDT) will review this training plan on an annual basis (SFY) and a report of recommendations will be submitted to the DCFS Executive Staff for review. Upon receipt of comments from DCFS Executive Staff, the PDT will incorporate all recommendations and directives and modify the DCFS Training Plan for publication to DCFS staff by July 15th of each year.

Required Training Hours

Employees of DCFS are mandated to attend a minimum number of annual training contact hours each year as set forth in these guidelines:

- Program staff (field staff, direct client contact and caseloads), Family Service Worker (FSW) classification, Area Managers - Twenty-four (24) annual hours required.
- Program Support staff (direct client contact, secondary or no caseload), Nurses, Health Services Workers, Health Services Specialists, SSAII, ILC - Fifteen (15) annual hours required.
- Non-program staff (administrative support, office personnel, administration having no direct client contact [DCFS Central Office] including DCFS Executive Staff) - Fifteen (15) annual hours required.
- Volunteers include persons serving in a foster or adoptive care capacity for DCFS - Thirty (30) hours pre-approval and fifteen (15) annual hours required after approval. Training hour requirement for adoptive homes will cease upon the completion of the adoptive process. Volunteers who are not serving in a foster or adoptive capacity, such as community volunteers or interns, are required to attend five (5) hours per year.

Required training hours will be completed based on the time frame connected with the employee's annual training performance evaluation (PPES), unless specific training mandates require credit prior to the completion of the PPES.

Additional Training Development Teams and Groups

The Professional Development Team (PDT), hosted by UALR, shall meet quarterly to discuss agenda items submitted by UALR, UAF, and DCFS participants. Agenda items shall address training issues, including, but not limited to, curricula development, training scheduling, problems encountered in coordinating training and reports of training delivered. A report of the minutes shall be delivered to DCFS within two weeks after the meeting. The PDT process will undergo evaluation to determine if the process requires enhancement or further development to ensure the effectiveness of the process.

The Partnership Steering Committee ("Partnership Meeting") is hosted by UAF and meets quarterly with the DCFS Executive Staff and other designated participants to discuss partnership progress, monitor compliance and resolve problems identified by DCFS and UAF.

DCFS Responsibilities in Curriculum Development with MidSOUTH Center. In order to accomplish the effective transfer of information to MidSOUTH Center for their curriculum

development, it is necessary for a curriculum pre-development group to meet to determine core issues and information needing to be included in the mandated training, along with the applicable promulgated policy. Participants in this group will include Executive Staff (or assigned designees) with knowledge with knowledge and interest in the development of critical topics to be included in the curriculum, MidSOUTH Center staff responsible for curriculum development and the DCFS PDU Manager. Upon determination of the core issues by the group, MidSOUTH will begin development of a draft curriculum and return the draft to the group and Executive Staff for review within six weeks. Upon final review and approval, MidSOUTH will begin implementation of the training as outlined in their contracted performance indicators.

Financial Reimbursement for Training Attendance

Employees and foster parents approved to attend training events and who require reimbursement shall submit their Travel Reimbursement (TR-1), through their supervisory chain. All state fiscal policy and guidelines must be adhered to in order to receive reimbursement. The DCFS Professional Development Unit will monitor and process valid reimbursement claims. Certificates or other documentation of attendance must also be submitted with CFS-360 forms (for elective training sessions) to receive reimbursement.

Funding Sources

Funding sources for training include federal funding (i.e., Title IV-E Foster Care, Title IV-E Adoption, Title IV-B part 1 and part 2, and TANF), state general revenues sources and grant funding, when available. (includes CAPTA although this is specifically used for training providers in the specific area of service delivery that they are providing). The IV-E Chafee ILP funding is used for the Annual Teen Conference training workshops.

Cost Allocation Methodology

DCFS uses the approved allocations process approved by the Federal and State plan. Listed below are the cost centers used in the cost allocation method.

- DCFS PRE-SERVICE TRAINING-FIELD 250-04-07-02-G1:
This cost center includes new worker training for DCFS field staff.
- DCFS IN-SERVICE TRAINING-FIELD 250-04-07-04-G1:
This cost center includes in-service training (excludes pre-service) for DCFS field staff.
- DCFS FOSTER/ADOPTIVE PARENTS 250-04-07-07 G1:
This cost center is used for Character 10 contracts and purchase orders to pay for training of foster/adoptive parents and other related training costs.
- DCFS EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT 250-04-07-08-G1:
This cost center is for salary and fringe for DCFS staff that are on full-time educational leave.
- DCFS TRAINING 250-04-07-15-G1:
This cost center includes training for staff which is not covered by DCFS pre-service-field or DCFS in-service training-field.
- DCFS PRE-SERVICE TRAINING-SUPERVISION 250-04-07-16-G1:

- This cost center is used for new supervisor/manager training (field or central office.)
- DCFS IN-SERVICE TRAINING-SUPERVISION 250-04-07-17-G1:
This cost center is used for in-service training (excludes pre-service) for DCFS field and central office supervisors and managers.
- DCFS CONTRACTING 250-04-07-18-G1:
This cost center is for Character 10 contracts and purchase orders to pay for trainers for staff and/or foster/adoptive parents.

Child Welfare Staff and Foster Parent Training	
IV-E Penetration Rate	69.52%
IV-E Fed Training Match	75%
UALR Fed-Approved Indirect Cost Rate	41.5%
UAF Fed-Approved Indirect Cost Rate	45%
UALR / UAF Indirect Cost Rate Billed to DCFS	8%

Total Estimated Cost of DCFS Training Contracts

The estimated total expenditure for IV-E training is \$7, 909, 337 for the 2006-2007 SFY fiscal year (UALR \$4, 859,720, UAF 3, 049, 617.)

Compensation Training: \$4,728,524

Reimbursable Training: \$1,443,738

Administrative Cost: \$1,736,625

This methodology includes training for all DCFS staff and includes foster parents and adoptive parents (resources).

Program Support:

DCFS TRAINING PLAN STATUS REPORT 2005-2006

The Professional Development Team (PDT), identified as the annual reviewing body of the Training Plan, was provided a copy of the plan in May of 2006. Participants in that group were requested to provide feedback on the document by the next meeting in July 2006. Training Plan goals not addressed in this status report will be provided to the group for discussion and resolution at the next meeting.

The 2006-2009 Training Plan was updated with the most current list of acceptable degrees for Family Service Worker job applicants. These additional degrees were included to widen the range of degree-qualified applicants.

The Foster Care IVE Penetration Rate was updated in the Training Plan to the correct rate of 69.52 %.

Goal #9 - A question was raised involving the level of supervisory approval of the CFS-360 form needed within DCFS for participants applying to attend elective training events provided through UAF or MidSOUTH, and if the approval could be made by the Area Manager and not have to travel to the Director of Community Services for the final approval. The Assistant Director of Community Services has determined that all training applications (CFS-360) for elective training events must be approved through the supervisory chain, including the Office of Community Services. This goal has been achieved and will be removed from the list.

Goal #10 – This goal addressed exploration of the development of a multi-tiered supervisor training program to provide advanced training for supervisors. Currently, a review group dealing with the Five Year Plan's Staffing goal, Objective 6 – "Provide additional training to Supervisors," has been meeting monthly since October 2005 to review the core supervisor training competencies used as a basis for the training topics provided to new DCFS supervisors. This group is comprised of DCFS field and Central Office staff and MidSOUTH Training Academy participants. When this task is completed and the DCFS Supervisor Training core competencies have been identified, the additional higher level competencies will be used to develop advanced multi-tier training for supervisory staff.

An additional item listed under this goal and concerned DCFS non-supervisory staff being allowed to attend Leadership training provided through MidSOUTH Training Academy. Recommendations have been offered and a decision by DCFS Executive Staff is pending.

Goal # 11 – This goal addressed the need to evaluate a plan to provide a DCFS Social Service Aide Educational Assistance Program to allow Social Service Aides to obtain a BSW or other acceptable degree. A policy has been developed concerning this program and is currently in the final stages of comment and approval. This will be a part time program with an initial cohort of three participants.

1. DCFS will review and determine changes/enhancements to ensure the effectiveness and consistency of application of current guidelines and publish a standardized method for conducting the panel process within DCFS. **Due date: June 30, 2009**
2. DCFS will review current practice within the Division and develop and publish a standardized volunteer orientation packet for use in all Areas. **Due date: June 30, 2009**
3. The Division will explore the possibility of developing job task competency clusters to better identify training needs of Central Office staff. **Due Date: June 30, 2009**
4. The Division will review various media that may be used in independent training events such as DVDs, CDs or Internet courses to expand the list of training resources used by the foster parents. **Due date: June 30, 2009**
5. DCFS will review the possibility of allowing foster parents with the skills to offer life skills training to identify foster children in their home. **Due date: June 30, 2009**
6. The agency will review and evaluate the process and criteria for the ITNA, to determine effectiveness of application in identification of actual training needs and impact on attendance in needed training activities. The ITNA process will also be reviewed to determine whether it will fit an intranet application so that the forms and computation could be completed online. **Due date: June 30, 2009**
7. DCFS will review the process of approval of pre-service training successfully completed by foster parents prior to entering service within Arkansas. If this process is approved, foster parents from states providing pre-service training acceptable to DCFS will be allowed to be reviewed for approval upon entry into the state. A method of providing information to these foster parents concerning legislation and mandates impacting foster parenting in Arkansas must be determined. **Due date: June 30, 2009**
8. With the recent development of entry and retrieval ability of worker training attendance records in CHRIS, DCFS will have need to determine the appropriate format for reports to be constructed by the CHRIS staff. DCFS Executive Staff and Area Managers will be contacted for input in the development of the needed information to be viewed multiple report formats needed to monitor employee training records. **Due date: June 30, 2009**
9. DCFS will evaluate the need to require supervisory approval of the CFS-360 and transmittal of forms for all elective training events for program staff, up through and including the Assistant Director for Community Services. Some training events provided by MidSOUTH or the UAF Partnership may only need approval up to the level of Area Manager. **GOAL COMPLETED 2005**
10. The Division will explore the development of a multi-tiered supervisor-training program to provide advanced training for supervisors. DCFS will also determine attendance criteria to allow non-supervisor staff to attend the Leadership portion of the DCFS New Supervisor Training event. **Due date: June 30, 2009**

11. DCFS is evaluating the possibility of developing a Social Service Aid Educational Assistance program to allow selected SSA staff to return to school at the beginning of their junior year for the purpose of obtaining a BSW or other degree acceptable to DHHS. **Due date: June 30, 2009**

Research and Evaluation:

Supervisor Review Quarterly Report – A report that provides detailed findings from child welfare case specific reviews conducted by supervisors in every county of the state. A 100% case review is required each quarter. The report provides information statewide, by area and by

county. The review serves as a one-on-one training situation on individual cases for the worker and allows the supervisor to work with the worker on practice issues. It allows the supervisor to determine if the FSW knows how to utilize best practice concepts and can work with the FSW on developing those skills.

Impact of Welfare Reform on Child Welfare Reports - A report that provides information on trends in welfare reform and its effect on child welfare within the state.

Mentoring Supervisors Project – An evaluation report of the Arkansas Mentoring Supervisors Project, funded by a federal grant through the Southern Regional Quality Improvement Center of the University of Kentucky was submitted on March 31, 2006. The project is testing the impact of mentoring of supervisors and clinical supervision.

Compliance Outcome Report (COR) – A monthly report that measures compliance with 36 established performance indicators that represent a commitment to best practice.

Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) – A quarterly report that provides information on service outcomes, compliance with standards set by DCFS with guidance from the Joint Interim Arkansas legislative Children and Youth Committee and demographics of children served throughout the year.

Annual Report Card (ARC) – A report that replicates the QPR on an annual basis.

Adoption Coalitions Evaluation Report – The adoption grant is a five-year grant designed to build community coalitions throughout the state to help with general, targeted and child-specific recruitment as well as provide adoption support to families. Quarterly adoption data reports are completed that provide information such as number of children placed in pre-adoptive homes, number of finalized adoptions and length of time from TPR to adoptive placement and finalization. The grant also includes a coalition website that is utilized to gather information on things such as memberships and activities of the coalitions. Lastly, an annual evaluation is completed to determine the effectiveness of the grant activities.

Quarterly Services Peer Review Reports – A report that provides detailed findings from comprehensive case specific qualitative reviews conducted by the Quality Assurance staff and agency staff throughout the State. This report is produced monthly with the exception of Area 6, where twice as many cases are reviewed over a two month period. This review is designed to replicate the Child and Family Service Review conducted by the federal Department of Health and Human Services.

All of the above-listed reports are planned for 2007.

Tribal Consultation:

Status for 2006

CHRIS reports that of the 3,510 children currently in foster care, four (4) children have been identified as American Indian/Native American. To ensure that DCFS is in compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act, Policy Procedure VI-AI directs the Family Service Worker to contact the Office of Chief Counsel immediately if there is any indication that the child is a member of an Indian tribe.

The five major components of ICWA that the Arkansas Plan addresses:

Identification of Indian children by the State Child Welfare Agency

Arkansas DCFS Field staff are required to ask questions to determine if a client is of Native American heritage when completing the CFS-6009 (Family Strengths and Needs Assessment). Workers are required to complete client information screens in CHRIS that identify the ethnicity of a child and family which includes a pick-list to specify an individual Indian tribe. The screen that is completed in CHRIS and the pick-list that identifies all recognized tribes in the U.S. is attached for your review.

In the new Family Strengths and Needs Assessment tool draft that was developed as part of the PIP (Action Step 1.2) there is a "Cultural Factors Section" which requires workers to describe any pertinent cultural influences or traditions of the household members. Do any household members speak a foreign language and need an interpreter? Is there a cultural practice that might appear to be abuse. Does the culture endorse physical punishment?

Does any household member claim Native American heritage (Yes or No)? If yes, what is the tribal affiliation and is the person on the tribal rolls? Could the children in this family fall under the scope of the Indian Child Welfare Act?

Notification of Indian parents and Tribes of State proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene

OCC attorneys have been trained on numerous occasions (twice by a staff attorney from the Cherokee Nation) on ICWA. OCC attorneys provide notification to Indian parents and tribes of proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene. An ICWA checklist (Attachment 2) has been developed and distributed to the OCC attorneys in May of 2006 and to other attorney and judges at the Child and Law Conference in 2006.

Special placement preferences for Indian children

OCC has assisted CFS when the tribe identifies an Indian foster home in ensuring that Indian children are placed in accordance with the preferences outlined in ICWA. The Arkansas Juvenile Judges have also been trained on ICWA and the judges know that the agency must make active efforts to prevent removal of Indian children from their homes. The Administrative Office of the Courts provided all of the OCC Attorneys and Juvenile Judges with a copy of the

Indian Child Welfare Act Checklists from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family

DCFS Staff with the assistance of the Arkansas Juvenile Judges and OCC make active efforts to prevent the removal of Indian children from their homes. There must be clear documentation during court hearings of the to prevent the removal of a child be the court grants custody to the Division. Each Arkansas Juvenile Judge uses the Indian Child Welfare Act Checklist in making decisions concerning cases where the child is of Native American heritage.

Use of Tribal courts in child welfare matters; Tribal right to intervene in State proceedings or transfer proceedings to the jurisdiction of the Tribe.

DCFS staff with assistance from OCC work with Tribal courts in child welfare matters when requested by the Tribal courts. Once a Tribal organization is notified of a Native American child's involvement in the child welfare system, field staff along with OCC work with the Tribal organizations, courts or appropriate representatives to implement services that are the best interest of the child and that are recommended by the Tribal courts. If the Tribe takes jurisdiction of the case DCFS staff work with the Tribal courts to facilitate the transfer of the case and the child.

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Native American children age 14 or older are eligible for Chafee services just as any youth in foster care in Arkansas would be. Any youth assigned to an IL Coordinator's workload is provided an assessment and Chafee services in accordance with their case plan. These youth are neither discriminated against nor provided preferential treatment with regard to IL/Chafee/ETV services.

CAPTA

CAPTA Goals and Objectives

Child Abuse/Prevention

FY '06

Goal – Trained staff from each Family Resource Center to teach Parenting Education.

Objective – Strengthening family relationships and child well being

Task – Identify Family Resource Center who will be certified to teach parenting education

Status – Staff were trained to teach parenting education. A total of sixteen (16) staff members from the ten (10) Family Resource Centers received training.

FY '07

Goal – Provide on going parenting education training for staff from each Family Resource Center and Human Services Workers in the Schools. Staff will be taught how to recognize and report child abuse, to differentiate poverty from neglect, abuse and neglect of children with disabilities, how children directly and indirectly disclose maltreatment and how to respond to the disclosure.

Objective – Educate families on child abuse, protect children and make sure that they are safe.

Task – Identify Family Resource Center and Human Service Workers in the School staff to attend the training.

Goal – Provide on going training for the Fatherhood Initiative providers. Training will be provided on child abuse and neglect. This training will enhance the fathers parenting skills and prevent the occurrence or re-occurrence of child abuse.

Objective – Ensure that the Fatherhood Initiative providers are trained to equip fathers that are enrolled in their program to be successful in accomplishing their goals.

Task - Identify fatherhood initiative staff/facilitators to be trained

FY '06

Goal - Distribute Child Abuse Prevention material to all counties for use in the field, offices, schools, Family Resource Centers, Arkansas State Police, and medical facilities.

Objective – Ensuring child safety by an educational campaign targeting public awareness.

Task – Contact areas for the number of brochures, flyers, and materials needed for distribution. Encourage counties to observe Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Status –This goal is on going. Staff will continue to distribute materials to make the public aware of child abuse and maltreatment.

FY '07

Continuance to distribute Child Abuse Prevention material to all counties for use in the field.

Intervention and Treatment

FY '06

Goal – Clients received an array of services that prevented and treated child abuse and neglect. Services were individualized and non-intrusive. Non-English speaking clients had interpreters to facilitate communication.

Objective – Systems were in place that targeted child welfare and effective intervention with families. Language was not a barrier.

Task – Identify, contract, and train providers/staff who will supply appropriate quality services.

Status – This service is on going and available twenty-four (24) hours per day.

FY '07

The continuance of interpreter services to county office staff with families who are not proficient in English. Service will be available in all seventy-five (75) counties.

Accomplishments

DCFS has certified two (2) or more Family Resource Center staff to teach parenting education in all ten (10) Family Resource Centers. Instructions are given in groups. Child development, childcare, anger management, Behavior modification, communication, and self-esteem are taught through a combination of curriculum and group exercises.

CAPTA funds purchased parenting education training materials. These materials are used to educate parents on communication issues, to identify behavioral changes in their children in a non-threatening manner, and how to better assist them to build solid relations with their children.

DCFS maintains an agreement with the Arkansas Chapter of American Pediatrics for the availability of a Physician to assist in responding to “Baby Doe” reports. Division policy outlines steps to be taken if a report is submitted. This agreement assures that a licensed physician is available at all times to assist DCFS staff in assessing these type calls.

Arkansas Interpreter Services provides interpreter services for county office staff statewide with families who are not proficient in English. This service also assists workers in the translation of documents.

Four (4) Fatherhood Initiatives are funded. Two of the four programs were funded this fiscal year. The program assists males between the age of 15 – 35 to establish strong, responsible and effective relationships with their children. Program support includes parenting education, employment counseling and referrals, relationship counseling, discipline, legal issues and planned activities with children.

Child Abuse Prevention materials are purchased with CAPTA monies and used for Child Abuse Prevention month around the state and handed out upon request. Counties who submitted a plan to host child abuse prevention activities were sent handouts to give to community and client participants. We purchased rulers, paper clips, pencils, pens, ice scrapers, electrical outlet plugs and wristbands with the Hotline number on it. Since April, we have gotten numerous requests for additional materials to distribute to the community.

The yearly continuing education classes for the Family Resource Centers and the Human Services Workers in Schools is purchased out of CAPTA funds. Both of these programs are preventive.

DCFS has a program to provide treatment to parents and caregivers of sexually abused children. The program requires participants to be assessed, given a diagnostic interview, receive a psychiatric review of case records and receive individual and/or group psychotherapy.

CAPTA funds one (1) Citizens Review Panel operating in Jefferson County. The panel is active and works diligently to evaluate child protective services. AR will have the required 3 Citizen Review panels in place by December 15, 2006.

The Citizen Review panel report on a monthly basis any issues or concerns. The follow up is monthly through the Area office. For future reference, any follow up needed will be made in writing and included in the yearly report.

Selected Program Area

The Division of Children and Family Services continues to comply with its selected program area, which covers improving skills of individuals servicing families and children. We continue to raise the qualification requirements of our purchased service providers. We continue to strengthen the performance indicators to provide more accountability. We continue to mandate continuing education for our contracted providers and staff. Our clients receive services from licensed and or certified providers.

DCFS Child Protective Services Unit continues to facilitate staff and provider training in drug screening, child abuse prevention and parenting education.

Child Protective Services does not plan or set policy regarding staff skills and qualification.

DCFS has a contract with Arkansas Commission Child Abuse, Rape, and Domestic Violence to train school staff, medical staff, daycare staff, and churches reporting child abuse and the Maltreatment Act.

DCFS collaborates the Division of Developmental Disabilities to ensure compliance and refer maltreated infants 0-3 for Early Intervention Services.

DCFS purchased handouts and child safety materials to inform parents and the public on issues of child abuse and neglect.

The Family Resource Centers and the Human Services Worker in the School Programs affords an opportunity to promote community empowerment to address the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

DCFS works with the Division of Youth Services around improved services to children, substance abuse and treatment.

DCFS works with the Division of Behavioral Health and the Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, and staff from Children Hospital to address the comprehensive needs of children.

Update of Activities To Be Implemented

The Division of Children and Family Services funded two (2) additional Fatherhood Initiatives in fiscal year 2006. CAPTA funds will continue to be used to purchase child abuse prevention supplies and training materials. Training regarding child abuse and neglect will be scheduled for staff from the Family Resource Centers, Human Services Workers in the Schools and the Fatherhood Initiative.

Child Protective Services Unit has requested for state fiscal year 2007 two additional Fatherhood Initiatives. One will be located in DCFS Area 5 and the other in Area 7.

The Fatherhood Initiatives assist fathers to increase their employment, education and relations with the child and child's mother. Fathers are administered a pre and post assessment. The four Initiatives served a combined total of two hundred eighty three (283) fathers in SFY '06. One hundred thirty eight (138) got a job placement; seventy-four (74) received their GED; fifty-seven (57) received vocational education counseling; forty (40) attended parenting classes. One hundred forty-two (142) completed the Fatherhood Curriculum. These numbers represented success.

CAPTA funds will be used to fund parenting education, fatherhood initiatives, language interpretations, training for providers, child abuse and neglect materials and supplies.

Description of Services and Training

The Division of Children and Family Services will offer training this fiscal year on child abuse and neglect to the Family Resource Center staff, Fatherhood Initiative providers and the Human Services Workers in the Schools. The Division believes that clients having a case plan where the family is involved in the planning can drastically reduce child abuse and neglect. Also by referrals to services offering support, instruction, and respite from everyday stressors. Parenting education, counseling, Intensive Family Services, Family Resource Centers, Fatherhood Initiatives are excellent referrals to prevent the occurrence or re-occurrence of child abuse.

All service providers and DCFS caseworkers are trained, skilled helping professionals who are supported and monitored to ensure best practice. DCFS contracts with MidSouth Training Academy and the Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape, and Domestic Violence who train professionals on issues of maltreatment, mandated reporting and assessment and case planning.

Interpreter Services-language interpretation services provided statewide in all languages for families not proficient in English.

Parenting Education Training and Supplies. Two or more staff members from the Family Resource Centers are certified to teach Active Parenting to DCFS referrals.

Fatherhood Initiatives – Four programs are funded to teach fathers parenting, job training, anger management, counseling education and relationship building.

Citizen Review Panels Annual Report and Response

The Annual Report for FY '06 from Jefferson County and DCFS' response are submitted in hard copy. The concerns were related to staff shortages. The panel recognized several areas of improvement such as mentoring between a staff person from a local college and new workers; medical services provided to foster children was noted as very good; improved communication with the local DCFS office and foster parents and information on foster children's Medical Passport has improved.

Criminal background checks for prospective foster and adoptive parents and other adult relatives and non-relatives residing in the household

This requirement is covered under DCFS policy VII and VIII. Policy VII. Services to Support Foster Parents, requires the completion of criminal background checks on each household member age fourteen (14) years and older. The same applies for prospective adoptive parents and other relatives in the home under Policy VIII.

Policy VII.-2 Services to Support Foster Families:

The Division shall place children in approved foster homes where the foster parents have satisfactorily completed the Division's pre service training curriculum, have been cleared through the Central Registry and through a local and State Criminal Record Background Check.

- The CFS-342A must be completed for each household member age fourteen (14) years and older. The Criminal Record Check will be repeated every five (5) years. The CFS-342 A must be submitted for checks by the designated DCFS staff person and routed to the DCFS Foster Care Unit. Document on the inquiry screen.

Policy VIII-F Adoptive parents and each family member of the household age fourteen (14) and older residing in Arkansas shall be checked with the identification bureau of the Arkansas State Police for convictions of offenses listed in ACA &9-28-409. Adoptive parents and each member of the household age fourteen (14) years and older residing out of the state shall provide State Police Criminal record checks from their state of residence. Out of state adoptive families do not

need to do an Arkansas state police Check if they have never resided in Arkansas a. Adoptive parents and each member of the household age sixteen (16) years and older who have not resided in Arkansas continually for the past six (6) years, shall complete a record check with the Federal Bureau of investigation. The Division will provide documentation in the case record that a criminal record check was conducted on the prospective adoptive parents.

A prospective adoptive parent will not be approved or licensed, if, based on a criminal record check, a court of competent jurisdiction has determined that the prospective adoptive parent has been convicted of a felony involving child abuse or neglect, spousal abuse, a crime against a child or children (including pornography), or a crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide, but not including other physical assault or battery.

A prospective adoptive parent will not be approved or license is, based on a criminal record check, a court of competent jurisdiction has determined that the prospective adoptive parent has within the last five (5) years, been convicted of a felony involving physical assault, battery or a drug related offense.

June 6, 2006

Brenda Goode
Community Action for Children
6204 Mulberry Street
Pine Bluff, AR 71603

RE: Citizen Review Panel

Dear Ms. Goode:

We have received the Annual Report and appreciate your comments. We would like to visit with you regarding the Citizens Review Panel. Our staff is scheduled to be in Jefferson County in July. Someone from our unit will be contacting you to schedule a time that is convenient for you.

We thank you for your commitment and support to children and families.

Thanks

Sincerely,

Linda Robinson, Program Manager
Community Support

Cc: Billye Burke, Assistant Director, Office of Community Support
Rosemary White, Assistant Director, Office of Community Services
Treda Rice-Vance, Area 7 Manager
Contonnia Brown, Program Coordinator, Office of Community Support
Carl Dokes, Program Coordinator, Office of Community Support
Deneen Delaney-Miller, Area 7 Financial Coordinator
File

June 2006 Annual Report of the Citizen's Review Panel-Jefferson County

The Citizen's Review Panel of Jefferson County has met three times this year and will meet in June for a total of four meetings this year. We have completed 13 case specific reviews with three more planned in June of 2006. Interviews have been conducted with professionals and community members including foster parents, school counselors, day care providers, probation officers, staff from the prosecutor's office and CASA staff and advocates. The case reviews reflect many needed services that have been provided to the families by the caseworkers and staff at DHHS. The caseworkers provided transportation to the parents and children to visits, medical appointments, counseling sessions, court hearings and to many other service providers in and out of the county. The case specific reviews also reflected areas that needed improvement. These included:

- All current and signed court orders need to be in the case file
- Current recommendations from mental health counselors, school counselors, and any other service providers need to be in the file.
- The court reports and narrative relating why case was opened should be in the case file. All required forms such as case plans needs assessments etc should be in each family members file.
- Dictation should be specific relating to the appearance of the parent/children, their interaction, the condition of the home and who was present. Discussions should relate to the case plans and any efforts the parents and children have made toward these goals or any problems related to their not being able to keep appointments related to the case plan/visits and workers suggestions.
- Each family member's dictation/forms should be in their own file and not mixed up with other family member's records.
- Court cases should be reviewed by supervisors two weeks prior to court date to ensure caseworker is familiar with the case and that all parties have been properly notified and case plans and forms are in the file, and the orders of the court have been met. If not a reason why not.
- Continued use of supervisory review tool and new case assignment form by supervisor.
- Cases that have been closed should have a closing statement as to why the case is no longer opened.
- More local foster homes opened to prevent out of town travel by caseworkers.
- Hire and train clerical aides to assist the caseworker in keeping the required paper work completed and filed in case record.
- More transportation aides to assist caseworkers in travel needs.
- Hire after hour staff to work when office is closed.
- Relocation of DHHS office to a larger more appropriate building better suited to meet the needs of the staff and families they serve.
- Increase the number of supervisors from 4 to 5 reducing their case load from 35 to 28 which would be more manageable.

Since 2003 there has been an increase in the turnover rate of caseworkers in Jefferson County. Specifically the FSWI and FSWII positions in the Children and Family Service Division. The panel began making specific recommendations regarding this problem at that time and has continued to date. This problem has worsened and has affected every area of the child protection system in our county. The panel has interviewed staff from the Prosecutors office, the Juvenile Justice office, foster parents and the local Mental Health Center. All complaints from the above sources center around a lack of experienced caseworkers they deal with on a daily basis. Some of the problems expressed were:

- The caseworkers come to court and do not have the case file or do not have any knowledge of the case file or explanations as to why previously ordered services from the court were not carried out. The judge has been issuing contempt orders against the Department on a regular basis. This adds to the workers stress level as new workers or worker with heavy caseload, this court pressure may appear unfair or UN resolvable leading to their resigning. Community professionals see DCFS as closing cases even foster care cases just to get them off their caseload; when they think the family is still in need of services.
- The prosecutor's office is having problems obtaining information from the caseworkers on cases coming up for trials. They expressed concerns about Protective Service cases where the child was a victim of sexual abuse and the perpetrator was coming back to the home that the PA staff believed was not closely supervised.
- Foster parents are not getting the information they need on children placed in their homes and workers are not visiting the foster homes as required. They are not notified of court hearings or what occurred at hearing. Siblings are not being put together even when foster parent agrees to take them. Caseworkers contact foster parents to take a child and when the foster parent agrees they do not hear back from the caseworkers. Sibling visits are not occurring, as they should.
- Caseworkers are so new and inexperienced they do not know the foster homes and can not make good decisions as to what homes to place the children in with the short time frame they are working. One worker said her supervisor told her not to contact her at night with such questions pertaining to emergency placements.
- New caseworkers not receiving the support they need but are given a heavy caseload with serious cases to start out with. Young caseworkers are having difficulty dealing with the demands of the job and the accountability of the court system. Jefferson County was at one time this year down 50% of their caseworker from up to 28 workers 14 giving new workers 35 -40 cases at times. The supervisors have up to 35 cases each to supervise.
- Caseworkers must work all day and be available to go out at night and transport foster children out of town not returning until late a night. Caseworkers spend much of their time transporting clients to and from service providers and do not have time to update the case files needed for court and to ensure compliance requirements. Caseworkers are tired and under stress are expected to routinely make good decisions affecting the lives of children and families.

It is the belief of the panel that the experienced caseworkers have provided extensive, quality and needed services to the families they are assigned to but it is apparent that regardless of the training and experience of the workers, the turnover rate has affected them as many seasoned workers and supervisors have also left the last year. Staff retention must be made a priority of the State if any of the other programs will be effective.

The State Child and Family State Plan FFYS 2000-2004 with objectives and recommendations to bring the State into compliance with the requirements of the Angela R. lawsuit was reviewed. The objectives and recommendations in this plan were excellent and improvement in the agency was clearly seen. The objective of staff retention and development was addressed in the 2004 state plan and reviewed by the panel for the purpose of this report. However, it appears during the past three years some of these recommendations pertaining to staff development and retention have not been adhered to with setbacks occurring in the agency service delivery to children and families. Specific areas affected were: weekly visitation, sibling and family visitation, interviewing children who are subjects of a child maltreatment report, documentation of the use of family needs assessment, required case staffing, case plans and assessment foster family homes.

The State Plan recommended a staff retention strategy that included staff development opportunities, policies and practices that facilitate team building among staff, more effective acknowledgement of exceptional performance and worker safety improvement strategies. The Division was to develop worker incentive initiatives. This was also a recommendation of the recent focus group study in Area VII.

The Center for the Study of Social Policy Annual Report Description of Summary and Recommendation was also referred to by the CRP. It stated that DHS will identify and eliminate barriers that prevent the achievement and maintenance of the settlement agreement standards on staffing and casework practices. Several barriers to stable staffing listed by the Study were:

- Delays in hiring caused by the lengthy paperwork required. (This has again become a problem in Jefferson County.) Another barrier was chronic delays in obtaining lists of qualified applicants from the central personnel office. Intense problem solving efforts between DCFS and division of Administrative Services removed the barrier. It is still 5-6 weeks before an applicant can be contacted with a job offer. Interviews are conducted at the county level and sent to the State office but stays in that office 2-3 weeks before any decisions are reported back to the county office on the hiring status. Often the recommended applicant has accepted another job.
- Staffing levels and caseload ratios was to be tracked and used in decisions regarding the deployment of staff. Workload Analysis would be conducted to assign weights to various types of cases. Such data was to be used to make informed decisions about the deployment of staff and determining appropriate staffing levels for county offices. Options to assure staffing standard of 15 cases per worker was recommended in the state plan addressing vacancy ratios. This was accomplished on January 1, 2000 using the State plan objectives and recommendations. The past three years in Jefferson County, the

staffing caseload has been three times higher than the standard reached in 2000. Cases have averaged 35 –40 per worker in Jefferson while smaller counties with low caseloads have the same number of staff members.

- A DCFS state policy was to have been developed that implemented a process to identify management and or casework problems at the early stages giving area managers and county supervisors opportunities to intervene in a timely fashion. The responsibility for maintaining this goal rested with Community Services and Planning and Policy Unit according to the State Plan.
- Causes of worker stress was to be determined and options to decrease stress implemented. Accomplished Date listed as July 1, 2000. The worker in Jefferson County stress level has been very high the last three years and reasons listed have been: after hour work and out of town transportation duties, lack of support from supervisors, court appearance pressure, and increasing caseload due to worker turnover. A recent example of lack of support from the State level was given to the panel: Last year while there was a staff shortage in Jefferson County DCFS workers were required to travel to Lonoke to assist the county office there for several weeks while things continued to back up at their own office.

A 14 year old Jefferson Co. foster child was hospitalized in Lonoke with no family support system so the Jefferson County DCFS staff was told they would have to sit with the girl 24 hrs a day as long as she was there. This again added to the pressure of the county office and staff. Also, in court contempt cases the worker reportedly comes under heavy scrutiny and criticism from the state office staff that some described as disrespectful and threatening to them and fearing they will be terminated the worker often resigned. The OCC attorney is seen by some county DCFS staff as critical and not supportive and not preparing them effectively for court.

The morale of the DCFS is described as being the lowest that they can recall. When workers have flex time and take days off it puts them further behind so the flexible scheduling is of no help when the staff shortage is so great.

The DHHS building in Jefferson County does not provide an environment conducive to good worker morale. The long dark halls with small offices are depressing and pose a barrier to effective casework with children and families. The furnishings in the visitation room are old and dirty hindering positive interaction between family members. It prevents the worker from taking pride in their job when the message they get and the families they work with receive is that they don't deserve anything better. If families come they want to leave as quickly as possible. There are no security officers and no metal detectors despite the fact that many of the family members coming to the DCFS office are upset and some even angry at the caseworkers who removed their children. With the problem of violence in our nation and our city today this should be an issue that is addressed. There has already been a workplace shooting in Jefferson County Tyson's plant this year. It is only a matter of time with parents who have anger problems and drug addictions may attempt an act of violence in the DCFS office. A Prevention plan needs to address the need for security at this office.

- Another objective in the State Plan was to increase the capacity of DCFS to respond to families after normal work hours. One county remained open until 10:00 p.m. each Tuesday and Thursday for scheduled activities. This is an area that causes much stress for all the DCFS workers.

The CRP recommending the hiring of additional staff to cover after hour reports or problems.

This would do more to retain workers than anything else with the possible exception of an emergency shelter in Jefferson County.

Areas of improvement seen at the local DCFS office include the following:

Information on foster children's Medical Passports has improve

Improved communication with the local DCFS office and foster parents

Initial clothing allowance procedure is better.

The DHS office has a new telephone system

Mentoring between a UAPB staff person and new workers is very helpful.

Medical services provided to foster children has been very good.

Jefferson County has now filled all of its vacant positions and new workers will be in training for the next six weeks. We are hopeful that this will reduce the stress to new workers and our retention rate will improve. It is very important that the State DHHS office adhere to the recommendations of the State Plan and the recent UAPB study on retention and staff development if services to families are to improve in our area.

The state used grant funds to purchase professionals services for families, which have greatly benefited them, but none of the other programs, and services made available to and for the families can be successful without a stable frontline work force. A successful and effective State DHHS program hinges on staff retention. Constant turnover prevents services to be delivered effectively and professionally to families and to the court.

Brenda Goode

Citizen's Review Panel Coordinator

Independent Living

REPORT ON THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PROGRESS

FY 2006

And

PLANNED ACTIVITIES and BUDGETARY LEVELS

FY 2007

The Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

SUMMARY UPDATE FOR FY2006

The Program

The Title IV-E Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) continued to operate in unison with the Foster Care Program during FY2005 to improve information dissemination about the CFCIP Program in the ten Children and Family Services areas in Arkansas. This was done to assist in the recruitment and training of foster parents and the recruitment of teens into the program and to provide the public with knowledge of what the program can do for foster teens. Information was shared with private facilities that house foster teens in an effort to further develop a working partnership so that a broader spectrum of basic life-skills training could be provided to teens prior to their reaching the age of emancipation. The effort was continued to search out professionals and academics that can assist the program in providing basic life-skills training to the grant program on an in-kind basis or for a reasonable cost. These resources can provide real world information to the teens about short and long-term situations that will affect them now and later as well as offering advice and support as a mentor would.

Categories of clients

The Division's Chafee Foster Care Independence Program provides services to youth between the ages of 14 to 21 to three (3) categories of clients:

1. Foster care youth and former foster care youth (including youth adopted at age 16 or older), IV-E eligible and non IV-E eligible, between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one (16-21) participating in high school, secondary school or an equivalent technical program.
2. Former foster care youth up to the age of twenty-one (21) are eligible for post-discharge services (After-care) if the youth was in foster care on his or her sixteenth (18th) birthday. Post-discharge services may include additional life-skills training. Also job search assistance, housing search assistance, community involvement, and board assistance may be provided, as funds are available.
3. Foster teens age 14-15 are provided appropriate life skills training and other services based on evaluations and assessments. These services have been provided for the past 7 years.

Policies of the Program

The Division of Children and Family Services continue to implement policy revisions regarding the Chafee legislation and to continually evaluate and revise existing policy to conform to changes in program goals, activities and services.

Accomplishments

The specific accomplishments and progress made in the past fiscal year toward helping youth make the transition to self-sufficiency; helping youth receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment; helping youth prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions; providing youth personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults; and meeting each of the program purposes included training and life skills workshops in the following

- Finance/Money Management,
- Vocational Planning,
- Parenting Health and Hygiene,
- Personal Appearance,
- Nutrition,
- Housing,
- Team Building,
- Self-Esteem,
- Legal Issues,
- Job Search/Vocational Planning,
- College Preparation,
- Drugs and Addictions,
- STD's/Sexual Awareness,
- Conflict Resolution and
- Community Resources.

1738 youth (duplicated count because youth attended more than one of the workshops presented) and 231 staff attended these workshops. In addition, 328 foster parents attended life-skills workshops with youth to monitor and assist in the training sessions.

Life-skills workshops	232	
Youth initially assessed during the year	296	
Youth reassessed	586	
Youth 14 –15 provided CFCIP services	172	
Total number of video presentations	68	
Persons attending video presentations	744	(duplicated count)
After-care services for aged-out youth	79	
Amount recorded in CHRIS for After-care	\$74,558	(Oct. 1, 2004 – Sept. 30, 2005)

Financial Assistance – After Care Services

Provided financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age.

- Room and board is for rent, utilities, deposits and food for foster teens that are age 18 or older and have emancipated from care and custody of the state. Basic housekeeping items are also included in this definition as “start-up” items to insure that needed items to begin basic housekeeping are available.
- Room and board payments for eligible youth who have aged out of foster care and request assistance will be limited in policy to up to \$500 per month for a maximum of three months, consecutive or not, and start-up assistance will be limited to a maximum of up to \$500. Start-up assistance will be limited to purchase of basic furniture and housekeeping items such as towels, sheets, cooking utensils, cleaning supplies and tools and safety items. Total assistance of up to \$2000 will be allowed for start-up and room and board. After-Care services were provided to 79 aged-out youth who requested assistance and were referred in FY 2005-2006
- Outreach for after-care services is being provided in the search for "former foster youth" in need of “After-care Services” by continuing to inform staff, foster parents, attorneys ad-litem, Youth Advisory Board members etc. of the "After-care" benefits, policies and procedures.

Training

Information on specific training that was conducted during federal fiscal year 2005, and is ongoing in FY 2006, in support of the goals and objectives include the following:

- Individual and group training for foster parents and teen sponsors is being provided, developed further and expanded to increase the knowledge and skills of this population in dealing with foster teens and assisting with life-skills development and reinforcement. 328 foster parents attended the various trainings and workshops. In addition, CFCIP/ETV workshops were provided for foster parents at Area and State foster parent trainings and conferences.
- Independent Living Coordinators were provided additional training on the life-skills assessments, documentation of contacts and services and recruitment for and provision of ETV assistance. Independent Living Coordinators, Family Service Workers and supervisors were provided training on the new policy that incorporated Chafee regulations. That training is still ongoing and will continue for new workers as they are hired.
- All life-skills training continues to be available to teens (up to age 21) that have aged out of foster care. In addition, they are still eligible for one-on-one counseling and staff assistance in the areas of housing, employment, financial management and transportation. If they choose to voluntarily remain in care after age 18 and continue their educational pursuits, they are also eligible for financial assistance with tuition, fees, books and room and board expenses through foster care, CFCIP and ETV. Teens that opt to leave care at age 18 or before age 21 will remain eligible for financial assistance with start-up items and room and board on an as-requested, funds-available basis and will remain eligible for ETV assistance based on educational progress. Policy and procedure to comply with the CFCIP legislation is being revised concerning the eligibility and limitations of financial support for former foster care clients. Services are also available to adoptees that were formerly in foster care.

Support Services

Provided personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults by conducting the following:

- Youth Advisory Board - Youth representatives on the board are becoming more involved in the agency and political processes that will assist the board in being effective as an advocacy group that will be listened to. Their focus is on understanding the system and

assisting with the development of new ideas, policy and methods that will enhance services for themselves and other foster youth.

Teen Conference - The Fifteenth Annual Teen Conference was held June 1-3, 2005. Arkansas' CFCIP coordinated and presented the conference instead of using CFCIP funds to contract for this service. There were 122 youth, IL Coordinators, Family Service Workers plus guests and presenters for this conference. The cost of the conference was \$18,534. Youth are immersed in activities that promote team building, decision making, self esteem, social interaction and other interpersonal skills in a very positive atmosphere

Arkansas Transition to Adulthood Conference – The second ATTA conference was held August 9-11, 2005 in Little Rock. There were 217 attendees that included foster teens, foster parents, Youth Advisory Board members, Family Service Workers, IL Coordinators, Area and State program Supervisors and managers, Office of Chief Counsel staff, DYS (Youth Services) staff, managers, case trackers and facility personnel, CASA volunteers, attorneys-ad litem, juvenile justice representatives and service providers. The cost of the conference was \$138,952 and included general sessions and workshops conducted by individuals nationally known for their experience and involvement in transitional and independent living programs and issues. Region 6 was also represented. The conference was set up and conducted with the assistance of the National Resource Center for Youth Services from the University of Oklahoma.

In federal fiscal year 2005, the total unduplicated number of youth served was 949. This includes youth for which direct paid-for services were provided as well as youth who were provided services such as life-skills training for which no direct cost was attached.

*The annual salary/match for the fourteen (13) employees paid out of the Independent Living Grant during FY2005 is \$207,668.64. Fringe at 30% is \$62,300.59. Total salary + fringe = \$269,969.23. This figure will increase for FFY 2005 as additional Area Coordinators are added to the grant.

Trust Fund Incentive Program

A trust fund is a treasury account budget in the Arkansas Administrative Statewide Information System that provides youth with financial and other appropriate support and services designed to help them transition to adulthood. For Arkansas, the trust fund program for youth receiving independent living services or transition assistance is described as the Educational Incentive Trust Fund for Post-Secondary Students. The fund provides an incentive savings account for students pursuing post-secondary educational goals to that upon completion of the course, aging out of the CFCIP system or being unable to continue or completed the course; there will be funds available to the student. Funds will also help with start-up expenses, housing expenses and other expenses required to complete the transition into adulthood and productivity.

It is estimated that the AR-CFCIP program will expend approximately \$32,000 on 26 former foster youth through the Arkansas Trust Fund Incentive Program during FFY 2006. This will include youth who were enrolled in 4-year colleges, 2-year colleges, vocational-technical schools and trade schools and who successfully completed college semesters or courses of study in other accredited schools prior to their cases being closed or aging out of care.

The Division of Children and Family Services, with approval from Region VI office of the Administration for Children and Families, established educational incentive trust funds on June 21, 2002, for youth leaving foster care.

Youth Served FFY 2005-2006 —113 (Incentive accounts maintained or paid out)

Beginning Balance Available - \$153,487

Committed to Date - \$151,750

Current Available Funds- \$1,737

Expended to date--\$68,500

Projected expenditures FFY 2006/2007--\$28,000

A description of and the agreement for funding, accumulation and disbursement of funds in this incentive account follow on the next seven (7) pages.

CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM

EDUCATIONAL INCENTIVE TRUST FUND FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

AUTHORIZATION FOR ESTABLISHMENT

Written notification was received from the Region VI office of the Administration for Children and Families on May 26, 1994 indicating the amendments to the Arkansas Chafee Foster Care Independence Program grant application establishing educational incentive trust funds for youth leaving foster care were acceptable. The notification indicated that the request had been reviewed and been found to comply with requirements provided in ACYF-PI-93-16 and that the information concerning Arkansas' Independent Living Trust Funds was permanent and would remain in effect unless it is rescinded, after notification in writing, to the Commissioner of ACYF.

SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR THE CFCIP TRUST FUND ACCOUNT

The sole source of funding for the Educational Incentive Trust Fund account will be any unencumbered, unexpended funds remaining in any Independent Living grant account on September 30 of the second year that a particular grant award covers. Independent Living grants are awarded for each Federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) and are allowed to be expended during two federal fiscal years. e.g. the grant award for the Federal fiscal year October 1, 1996 through September 30, 1997 (FFY1997) may be expended until September 30, 1998. Any funds remaining on September 30, 1998 would be transferred to the Incentive Trust Fund Account. At the point the Educational Incentive Trust Fund is depleted, the program will cease operation and close any and all associated active accounts. No further incentives will accumulate or be credited to any student's account for payment.

Any funds that remain in the Educational Incentive Trust Fund account for a period of six (6) months and are not anticipated to be paid out during that state fiscal year may be placed with the Investment Section of the State Treasurer's Office for deposit to an interest bearing Certificate of Deposit for a period of (not to exceed) three (3) months.

PURPOSE AND USE OF THE CFCIP TRUST FUND ACCOUNT

To provide an incentive savings account for students pursuing post-secondary educational goals so that upon completion of the course, aging out of the CFCIP system or being unable to continue or complete the planned course, there will be funds available to the student to utilize for

additional educational expenses, graduation expenses, start-up expenses, housing expenses or other expenses required to complete the transition into adulthood and productivity.

CLIENT ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

Youth who choose to remain in foster care after graduating from high school and enroll in post-secondary educational pursuits such as college, junior college, vocational-technical school or trade school and who sign a post-secondary education participation agreement will be eligible to accrue incentive credits in a ledger account established under their name.

Eligibility will continue for as long as the student is enrolled and incentives will accrue until (1) the educational pursuit is completed (2) the student withdraws from the educational program or, (3) their 21st birthday occurs. At that time, their eligibility will cease and any funds accrued in their account will be paid to them.

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT AND CRITERIA

Youth who participate in post-secondary educational programs will only be eligible for incentive credits for as long as a signed contract following the guidelines below is in force.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

Contract

For _____
Youth Name

- The youth must be enrolled as a full time student in an accredited institution or he/she will be dismissed from foster care. Youth will apply for and keep active Federal Pell Grant and other available grants and scholarships.
- The youth will maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0.
- The youth will provide a copy of each semester's grades to the FSW. Youth will agree to sign a release for Worker to obtain information from the institute regarding youth's class schedule, grades, attendance records, and financial aid status.
- The youth will attend all scheduled classes. The youth will contact their Sponsor or CFCIP Coordinator, if they have already acquired 2 absences, for written permission to miss any additional classes.
- The youth will attend a minimum of 10 scheduled Basic Life-Skills Training workshops and/or activities annually.
- The youth will attend DCFS staffings in order to actively participate in establishing, updating, and following their case plan.
- The youth may attain and maintain a job that does not interfere with academic endeavors to assist with support.
- The youth will maintain contact with their sponsor and FSW Worker at least twice monthly totaling 4 monthly visits, unless a waiver has been approved.

- The youth will notify caseworker of any changes in school, work and/or living arrangements within two (2) days of said change.
- The youth will not partake of alcohol, drugs or substances that are not prescribed. Any positive urine analysis may result in immediate dismissal from the IL Program. Youth agrees to submit to random UA when requested.
- The youth may be dismissed from the IL Program if he/she is found guilty of any illegal activity.
- If teen exhibits inappropriate behavior that demonstrates his/her inability to work with Worker, Sponsor, and CFCIP Coordinator; he/she will be dismissed from the IL Program.
- Failure to comply with all contract statements will result in a 'Determination Staffing'.

Outline of Responsibilities:

Freshmen

- Youth will live in a foster home, with their CFCIP Sponsor or if Worker allows, in dorm housing.
- Youth must maintain and pass 15 credit hours each freshmen semester (12 credit hours of basic courses + 3 credit hours of electives).

Upper Classmen

- Youth may live in own residence if the residence is in compliance with Independent Youth's Residence Checklist (CFS – 370).
- No roommates will be allowed for upperclassmen residing in their own residence.
- Youth will comply with all rules and regulations set forth by the landlord. This includes all signed rental and lease agreements.

Sponsor

- Sponsor will attend all staffings and make sure the youth is abiding with the terms of the established case plan.
- Sponsor will assist the youth in maintaining a budget of monthly income and expenses.
- Sponsor will visit the youth twice monthly and will notify Worker of any problems detected during the visit.
- Sponsor will receive and disburse monthly board payment to youth based on the current budget plan.

Family Service Worker

- Worker will initiate an appropriate board payment for youth based on the current budget needs while the youth is in foster care.
- Worker will notify youth and Sponsor, and IL Coordinator of staffings.
- Worker will visit youth weekly, unless a waiver is approved.

- Worker will maintain monthly contacts with Sponsor (can be telephone or e-mail contacts).
- Worker will provide CFCIP Coordinator with a copy of youth's class schedule at the beginning of each semester.
- Worker will provide CFCIP Coordinator with youth's grades, attendance records and financial aid status within seven (7) days of each semester's end.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Coordinator

- Coordinator will request CFCIP funding for youth if he/she qualifies.
- Coordinator will notify FSW Supervisors, Youth and Sponsor of all workshops, trainings and activities.
- Coordinator will assist youth in finding resources to prepare him/her for independence.

Participation in the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program will end when the youth has:

- Reached 21st birthday
- Achieved independence to the extent that financial support and social services are no longer needed.
- Made a voluntary decision to no longer participate in the IL Program, therefore leaving Foster Care.

OR

- Demonstrated unwillingness or the inability to meet the requirements of the IL Program and the terms of the agreement established in the case plan.

I join in an agreement as to the specified conditions of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. I have read, understand and voluntarily agree to abide with the contract terms.

_____ Youth's Signature	_____ Date	_____ Sponsor's Signature	_____ Date
_____ Family Service Worker	_____ Date	_____ CFCIP Coordinator	_____ Date

ACCUMULATION OF INCENTIVE CREDITS:

For Four-year School Attendance:

A credit of \$500 will be posted to the student's ledger account for each full, spring or fall, semester that is completed in accordance with the student's contract/agreement concerning grade point and hours completed.

A maximum credit of \$250 will be posted to the student's ledger account for each completion of six (6) hours or more of courses during summer terms between freshman and sophomore terms, sophomore and junior terms and junior and senior terms. The total allowable incentive to be posted under this category is \$4750.

For Two-year or Junior College Attendance:

A credit of \$500 will be posted to the student's ledger account for each full, spring or fall, semester that is completed in accordance with the student's contract/agreement concerning grade point and hours completed.

A maximum credit of \$250 will be posted to the student's ledger account for completion of six (6) hours or more of course completion during summer terms between first and second years.

For Vocational-Technical School Attendance:

For each six (6) months of study/course time required to complete a vocational-educational study plan in accordance with the student's contract/agreement, a maximum of \$500 will be credited to the student's ledger account.

For Specialty and Trade School Attendance:

For a training/course period lasting 3-6 months, a maximum of \$500 will be credited to the student's ledger account if completed in accordance with the student's contract/agreement. If the course/training lasts more than 6 months, an additional \$500 will be credited to the student's ledger account for each additional 6-month period or portion thereof after the initial 6-months are completed.

For GED Training:

For attending GED courses, completing and passing the final GED examination and receiving the GED Certificate according to the terms of the student's contract/agreement, a maximum of \$750 will be credited to the student's ledger account.

Under no circumstance will the total credited to any student's incentive ledger account exceed \$4750.

PAYMENT OF ACCUMULATED INCENTIVE CREDITS:

A payment of the accumulated incentive credits may occur at one of the three following times:

1. The educational course is completed.
2. The student's 21st birthday occurs.
3. The student withdraws from the educational course. Credit will be given up to the last full semester or course completed.

The student's case must be closed and notification forwarded to the Independent Living Unit Manager. The Unit Manager will confirm and verify the total accumulated incentive as recorded in the ledger account for that student and notify, in writing, the Chief Financial Officer for the Division of Children and Family Services of the client name, case number, address and the amount of the state warrant to be issued in payment.

Once an incentive accumulation has been verified and paid and the case closed, no other educational incentives may be accumulated for and paid to the student. If a student continues in a post-secondary educational plan after receiving their GED, they may continue to accumulate credit until one of the above three occurrences takes place.

Educational and Training Vouchers

We have continued to work to expand utilization of the ETV program by using various avenues to inform eligible youth of its availability. Efforts have included working with colleges and other institutions of post secondary education to include information about ETV on their web sites, working with Workforce Education representatives, holding workshops on ETV at our annual youth conference, and insuring that our independent Living Coordinators are knowledgeable about the program. We have been so successful that our allotment of ETV money was exhausted and we are seeking redistribution of funds underutilized by other states.

Financial and Statistical Information Reporting

Status:

Family support – 41%

Family preservation – 29%

Time-limited Family reunification – 15%

Adoption promotion and support – 5%

Administration – 10%

The Division intends to spend 20% for at least two categories: family support and family preservation. With the availability of title IV-E funding and the impact of cost allocation, slightly less than 20% was spent on time-limited family reunification. Previously contracted IFS in Pulaski County and statewide Anger Management were brought in-house. The agency had another funding source for counseling services. As the Division has alternate funding for adoption promotion and support, including the Adoption Incentive funds and the Adoption Opportunities Grant, in addition to the normal title IV-E funding, we did not need to utilize as much title IV-B, subpart II funding for this purpose.

Utilization of this funding source for staff is still a relatively new process, so it is unknown at this time how cost allocation will impact the usage for each purpose. We will continue to monitor that usage.

Division of Children and Family Services

Financial information comparing FY 2004 State and local share spending for Subpart 2 programs against the 1992 base year amount as required to meet the non-supplantation requirements in section 432(a) (7) (A) of the Act.

1992 Base Year

	Federal	State
Base Funding	\$ 4,969,308	\$ 1,909,803

(This represents the base funding on \$273,911,000 level and \$141,000,000 level combined)

Fiscal Year 2004

	Federal	State
Funding	\$ 3,097,090	\$ 681,360

Division of Children and Family Services
Financial information comparing FY 2004 State expenditures
against State expenditures under Title IV-B in 1979

1979

	Federal	State
Base Funding	\$ 690,213	\$ 370,837

Fiscal Year 2004

	Federal	State
CFS 101 - Column A - Line 6	\$0	\$0
CFS 101 - Column A - Line 7	\$0	\$0
CFS 101 - Column A - Line 13	\$0	\$0

APSR STATS - June 6, 2006

Chafee Expenditures FFY2003/2004 (end 9-30-04)		\$739,431.00
* Room and Board for FFY 2003/2004 (10.5%)		\$ 78,230.00
Chafee Expenditures FFY2004/2005 (end 9-30-05)		\$764,776.00
*Room and Board for FFY2004/2005 (10.5%)		\$ 80,872.00
Chafee Expenditures FFY2005/2006 (end 9-30-06)		\$771,514.00
ETV Expenditures FFY2003/2004 (end 9-30-04)		\$224,927.00
ETV Expenditures FFY2004/2005 (end 9-30-05)		\$249,575.00
ETV Expenditures FFY2005/2006 (end 9-30-06)		\$263,647.00
ETV - Applications in FFY2003/2004		61
ETV – Approved Applications 2003/2004		57
ETV – Funded Applications 2003/2004**		57
ETV - Applications in FFY2004/2005		96
ETV - Approved Applications 2004/2005		91
ETV - Funded Applications 2004/2005**		85
ETV – New applications for 2004/2005		46
ETV - Applications in FFY2005/2006		108
ETV - Approved Applications 2005/2006		96
ETV - Funded Applications 2005/2006**		81
ETV - New Applications for 2005/2006		23
FFY 2006/2007 Applications Expected to be Funded		80
FFY 2006/2007 Expected ETV Funds		\$271,947
FFY 2006/2007 Requested Additional ETV Funds		\$130,000

*Room and board expenditures include funds spent for rent, rental deposits, utilities, utility deposits, food and housekeeping start-up items for youth who have aged out of care but have not yet reached the age of 21.

** The per-student average funding for Arkansas ETV is much less than \$5000 cost-of-attendance maximum allowable each year:

2003/2004 = \$3946

2004/2005 = \$2936

2005/2006 = \$3255

Juvenile Justice Transfer

Currently there are thirty-seven (37) youth who began in DCFS custody and are now in Division of Youth Services custody (juvenile justice system). Twenty-one days after the child is committed, a multi-disciplinary staffing is convened to determine child's comprehensive treatment plan that includes Community reintegration. The system works well and allows youth to retain their DCFS caseworker with a DYS tracker. The Division of Youth Services reports monthly on the status of DCFS children in their custody. The report of 37 youth reflects the period 2/2005 –7/2006.

Inter-Country Adoptions

Federal Requirement: A description of the activities that the State has undertaken for children adopted from other countries, including the provision of adoption and post adoption services. This will include the number of children who are adopted from other countries and who enter State custody as a result of disruption for adoption or the dissolution of an adoption, the agencies who handled the placement or the adoption, the plans for the child, and reasons for the disruption or dissolution.

Status

No children from a disrupted or dissolved inter-country adoption have been in DHHS/DCFS custody during state fiscal year 2006.

The current adoption and post adoption services would be available to families who have adopted internationally.

Child Welfare Demonstration Projects

The Division of Children and Family Services was awarded an ACYF grant in October, 2003, under Adoption Opportunities, Title II of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Reform Act. The purpose of the project is to test the model for involving communities in the recruitment and retention of adoptive parents for children in foster care.

The intent of the project is to develop adoption coalitions in each of the ten (10) DCFS areas of the state. Adoption coalitions have been organized in seven (7) areas. The objectives of the project include additional development of coalitions; support of the existing and new coalitions; support of coalition recruitment activities; building capacities of private adoption agencies to support adoptions of children in foster care; to develop information booklets on practices that work; and to provide support services to current and prospective adoptive families. Coalition membership is comprised of local persons interested and involved in adoption, the community, and the Division. Efforts have been made to develop partnerships with the faith-based sector and other community stakeholders to build resources. Plans have also been implemented to coordinate foster and adoptive recruitment efforts, internally and externally.

Title IV-B funds are used to maximize the grant funds primarily through use of DCFS staff time. Several DCFS staff support the coalitions, not only through the membership, but also in administrative responsibilities due to vacancies of project staff such as the Project Director and Administrative Assistant. A DCFS Adoption Specialist is assigned to each coalition and they have been instrumental in providing assistance, educating coalition members on policy and participating in events of the groups.

Foster and Adoptive Parents Recruitment

Foster Parent Recruitment Plan

GOAL

Recruit foster families in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of children in foster care.

Objective 1

Increase awareness and education of DCFS and DHS staff concerning foster care needs.

Tasks

- (1) Develop and distribute informational materials
- (2) Develop a structured response to inquiries received at the county/area/central Offices
- (3) Develop a uniform inquiry packet to include information on foster care and Adoption to send to all inquiries (statewide, area, county)
- (4) Utilize existing communication mechanisms (newsletters)
- (5) Inform DCFS workers of the types of foster homes most needed (CORE and continuing education)
- (6) Encourage efforts to explore relative placements (kinship care homes)

Completion of Tasks by June 30, 2006 and ongoing

Status

Area 1

- Presented information to the new worker trainee classes about recruitment and the need for more foster parents

Area 2

- Placed newspaper ads in Sebastian and Logan Counties
- Placed flyers in County DHHS offices
- Informed DCO and other staff of inquiry meeting dates for telephone inquiries
- Distributed brochures – Each One, Tell One

Area 3

- Meet with county staff to look at the needs and concerns of foster parents and recruitment ideas.
- Resource Workers joined the DCFS staff.

- Foster and adoptive recruitment is stressed at monthly Area meetings.
- Monthly Area Recruitment team meetings are held - comprised of a representative from each county, the Resource Workers, the Area Manager, the Adoption Specialists, and the Program Coordinator.

Area 4

- DHHS and DCFS staff participate in the Area Adoption Coalitions in Columbia and Miller counties. Information has been shared about DCFS programs and our program needs for foster and adoptive parents. Member's assistance in recruitment and involvement in planning has been solicited. A newsletter is being developed through the Miller County Coalition.
- The Miller County newsletter has been developed. In October, there was an article about the need for foster parents.
- Foster Care awareness was raised through the DCFS efforts to solicit assistance from DHHS for Christmas for the foster children.
- Columbia County participated with the adoption coalition and DHHS with a float in the Christmas Parade.
- Little River County has a banner displayed on the front of the office.

Area 7

- Attended Area VII staff meetings
- Made Notebook for each county regarding provisional foster home (kinship). The notebook contains everything to complete the CFS-474 (Provisional Checklist).

Area 10

- Volunteers helped to distribute flyers to bolster foster parent recruitment.
- Displayed recruitment banner to elicit public response to foster parent recruitment efforts.
- Routine distribution of pamphlets and promotional items to DCFS and DHHS staff to increase awareness of foster care needs and to provide recruitment opportunities.
- Maintain open lines of communication with CQI representative to keep informed of foster care needs and concerns.
- Encouraged team involvement and participation via fund raisers for Southeast Arkansas Foster Parent Association: Lend A Hand – Save A Can; Christmas Fund Drive; Ms. Southeast Arkansas Pageant and Little Miss Pageant; Quilt Give-A-Way Youth Talent Show; Truck Show; and Cooking with Family Session.
- DCO staff member/Monticello Girl Scout Leader and the troop members volunteered their time to distribute flyers and promotional items to alert the public on Child Abuse Awareness Month.
- Invited DCFS staff, Judges, and CASA members to Foster Parent Picnic.

Central Office

- Prepared a display board on adoption and foster care in the entryway of the building in celebration of National Foster Care Month.
- An article about Foster Care Month and DCFS' foster care needs was written for the DHHS newsletter.

Objective 2

Enlist the support of DCFS Foster Parents to assist in recruitment efforts.

Tasks

- (1) Meet with foster parent support groups/associations
- (2) Identify ways foster parents can assist in recruitment efforts
- (3) Develop a foster family recruitment kit
- (4) Communicate with foster parents through the Foster Pride newsletter
- (5) Provide information at the State Foster Parent Conference
- (6) Provide information at the Area conferences
- (7) Send information to foster parent support groups
- (8) Inform prospective foster parents through pre-service training about the types of children needing care.

Completion of Tasks by June 30, 2006 and ongoing

Status

Area 1

- Provided brochures to foster parents for distribution
- Presented information on foster care at churches of foster parents

Area 2

- Foster parents passed out flyers in counties
- Foster parents assisted with radio spots and television spots
- Foster parents assisted with speaking engagements at churches and schools

Area 3

- Staff is encouraged to speak with foster parents about the requirements. Staff is available to speak about fostering and the requirements.
- Saline County foster parent association has displayed a booth to promote fostering and adoption.

- The Area Program Coordinator spoke at the Saline County Foster Parent Association in November regarding the need for foster parents as well as the requirements and ongoing maintenance of standards.
- Garland County held a festival with music and food in April. Awareness of both Child Abuse Month and Foster /Adoption Recruitment were promoted. Foster parents helped with the food. Attendees were asked to bring a toiletry item for care bags for children entering foster care.
- Saline and Hot Spring Foster Parent Associations use word of month to increase awareness about foster parenting.
- Montgomery County staff helped foster parents organize their foster parent association. Training was held for the foster parents to discuss the need for recruitment and reach out to potential members.

Area 4

- Foster parents have been invited and attend both the Coalitions and the Inquiry meetings.
- A workshop was held at the Area Foster Parent Conference which included information on recruitment and requested assistance from the foster parents in recruitment efforts.
- Miller County did a foster parent awareness and appreciation program in May. Foster parents from Little River, Sevier, and Hempstead Counties were included. DCFS staff collected food donations and door prizes.
- Inquiry recruitment packets were provided to one foster parent from Sevier County to assist him with recruitment.

Area 5

- Pope County foster families were given pamphlets to distribute to friends and family in July and August.

Area 6

- The Pulaski County Foster Parent Association conducts meetings every month and encourages foster parents to recommend reliable families to foster.

Area 7

- Area foster parents are invited to inquiry meetings so that they can answer questions of prospective foster/adoptive parents.
- Spoke at Foster Parent Association meetings to enlist foster parents in the recruitment of prospective foster/adoption parents.

- Conducted training at Foster Parent Association meeting in Dallas County regarding re-evaluations.

Area 8

- The Greene County foster parents invited the public to a recruitment activity and included current foster parents in July.
- In August, the Izard, Fulton, and Sharp County Foster Parent Association hosted a community gathering at the Ozarka College in Melbourne to inform interested parties about foster parenting. There were about 90 persons in attendance (foster parents, foster children, general public) including a speaker and gospel singing groups.
- Current foster parents actively recruit new foster parents as an on-going project.
- Greene County foster parents have done radio spots informing the public of the need for more foster homes.
- In March, the Sharp, Izard, and Fulton County Association hosted a concert at the Miller Auditorium. The public was invited and information on the need for foster parents was discussed.

Area 9

- Worked in conjunction with the Area Foster Parent Association on recruitment.

Area 10

- Collaborated with the County Administrator to recruit volunteers to assist in foster parent recruitment efforts and other DCFS/DHS program and activities.
- Implemented a plan to promote foster parent recognition via foster parent newsletters, family movie nights, and foster family yearbook with the aid of DCFS staff and volunteers.
- Encouraged and evoked assistance in recruitment efforts during the Foster Parent Association meetings and events.
- Recognized foster parents and volunteers for their outstanding contribution to recruitment efforts and their ability to provide quality foster care services.
- Requested foster parents to refer prospective foster parents. Several families were referred.
- Collected foster parent information to assist UAM Partnership in the development of the Quarterly Foster Parent Newsletter. Information was sent to DCFS/DHHS as well as foster parents.
- In March, Drew County held their first annual Easter Egg Hunt to honor their foster parents and to promote team building. The Southeast Arkansas Foster Parent Association conducted training and a family luncheon after the event.

- The Southeast Arkansas Foster Parent Association donated funds to the St. Patrick's Day Fund Raiser in appreciation of the agency's team building efforts.
- The Southeast Arkansas Foster Parent Association completed its Foster Families Fun Day at which foster parents and foster children attended and received training.

Central Office

- The Foster Parent Ombudsman has attended 19 Foster Parent Association meetings statewide.
- The Foster Parent Ombudsman attended 4 Area Foster Parent Conferences.
- An article was written for the Foster Pride Newsletter about honoring our foster parents in National Foster Care Month.
- A letter and certificate of appreciation from the DCFS Director was sent to all of the DCFS foster parents who have fostered for 5 years or longer in recognition of Foster Care Month.

Objective 3

Increase awareness and education of the community concerning foster care needs.

Tasks

- (1) Develop and implement strategies for communication with the community
 - DCFS partners
 - Faith community
 - Social organizations
 - Professional organizations
 - Service providers
 - Business community
 - General public
- (2) Participate in conferences/meetings (display booths, informational materials, speakers)
- (3) Distribute materials

Completion of Tasks by June 30, 2008 and ongoing

Status

Area 1

- Displayed information at Madison and Carroll County Fairs
- Placement Unit sent letters to all the Area churches asking that information on foster parenting be placed in the church bulletin
- Presentation on foster care to Kiwanis Club
- Presented a display booth on adoptions and foster care at the Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect in April in Eureka Springs

- Presented a display booth on adoptions and foster care at RazorFest – a large event sponsored by a local community group- the booth featured interactive activities and the theme was “Welcome to my Community” – with assistance from the Adoption and Foster Parent Association

Area 2

- Participated in Logan and Sebastian County Fairs
- Displayed banners in Sebastian and Logan Counties
- Had an Open House for the community
- Put flyers in local businesses
- Put names of DCFS contacts in the United Way Volunteer Book
- Had information of May Foster Care Month on lighted board at Banks
- Speaking engagements at local groups
- Advertising activities and inquiry meetings on Community Calendar
- Website information on local television channel

Area 3

- Rev. Martin spoke with the faith-based community regarding the need for foster and adoptive parents. A booth was displayed about fostering and adopting featuring promotional and informational items.
- Booths at county fairs were set up in Montgomery, Pike, Clark and Howard Counties.
- The Hot Spring County newspaper, The Malvern Daily Record, has been providing advertising for foster and adoptive families at no charge to the agency.
- Inquiry meetings have been held monthly in Garland and Saline counties and rotate in the other counties.
- Flyers were provided to churches in Clark County.
- Display booths were set up twice in May and a fair in June in Hot Spring County.
- Flyers were placed in the local newspaper in November, December, and January in Montgomery County. A poem entitled “Can you be a Foster Parent” was printed in the newspaper in January. Ads/articles were in the newspaper in February, March, and April about children and foster parenting. News ads are ongoing on a biweekly basis. Ad is in the Mt. Ida/Joplin UMC church news mailer. Ad on KWXI radio to promote fostering in April. Letter to the newspaper editor about foster care month in May. Flyers ongoing at the Montgomery County Library.
- Booth set up at the annual Murfreesboro Festival in Pike County.
- Mailer sent to all churches in Polk County for the June Inquiry meeting. Booth at the Healthy Family Expo in June. Advertisement in the local newspaper regarding the Inquiry meeting. Letter to the newspaper editor about foster home needs.

- A balloon release was held at the Saline County courthouse to signify the number of children in foster care in Saline County and the need for foster parents. CASA, the court, current and former foster parents and staff participated. The County Judge spoke at the celebration and Miss Arkansas sang. Flyers and ribbons were circulated.
- Each county has contacted local schools and plan to have a booth during Kindergarten registration day.

Area 4

- Inquiry meetings have been held in most counties.
- Articles and announcements in the local newspaper, radio, and some TV before the meetings.
- Sevier County has focused on getting information to local churches through distribution of brochures.
- Little River County has done some PSA on the radio and presentations at church.
- Columbia County had a display booth at the fair. County staff have been interviewed by the local newspaper for an article about foster parenting.
- Union County had a display booth at the County Fair
- The banners purchased have been displayed outside several offices on an ongoing basis.
- There have been newspaper articles in Columbia and Hempstead Counties in honor of retiring foster parents. Both articles emphasized the need for foster parents.
- A flyer was developed for Miller and Little River Counties for presentation to DCFS staff.
- Nevada County put recruitment information boxes in local businesses.
- Union County had a booth with recruitment information at the Boys Club.
- Union County had staff make a presentation at a member's church.
- DCFS staff passed out flyers at the Union County Relay For Life in May.
- Union County had a display booth on recruitment at the Mayhaw Festival in May
- Union County Health Fair had a booth with recruitment information in May
- Union County placed information posters at convenience stores, Wal-Mart, businesses, and churches.
- Ouachita County has been sending recruitment information to about 25 churches each month.
- Miller County staff presented information on a local radio station on the need for foster parents and the process.

Area 5

- Inquiry meetings were held in counties.
- Invitation to inquiry meetings being sent to local newspaper.

- Display booths at County Fairs in August – September in Newton, Pope, and Conway counties. The “11th Commandment” Video was used.
- Contacted local media about a foster parent article.

Area 6

- An inquiry meeting is held once a month.

Area 7

- Monthly inquiry meetings are held for prospective foster/adoptive parents. A power point presentation explaining the foster/adoption process is used at these meetings. Lonoke and Jefferson Counties meet on a monthly basis and all other counties meet on either a bi-monthly or quarterly basis.
- Resource workers attended county events and activities to distribute information and inform the public about the recruitment efforts of DCFS – Grant County, Timberfest; Calhoun County, Hogskin Fest; Lonoke County, Blue Ribbon Breakfast.
- Spoke to local faith based organization about the recruitment efforts of DCFS
- Met with CASA organizations to enlist their help in recruitment efforts
- Local newspaper printed articles about the need for foster parents and about the inquiry meetings.
- Publicized about inquiry meetings on local radio stations.
- Posted recruitment posters throughout Lonoke, Jefferson and Dallas County.
- Distributed information about foster parenting to local businesses.

Area 8

- In August, DCFS and DCO staff had a display booth at the Fulton County Fair and provided information on adoptions and foster care.
- Lawrence County newspaper ran an article about the need for more foster homes.
- Inquiry meetings were held.

Area 9

- Several articles appeared on foster parenting in the Batesville newspaper.
- Radio and print ads were developed.
- Several counties had recruitment get-togethers.
- An article for Foster Care Month was run in the White County newspaper. The article included information about the need for foster parents, the situation in White County, the reasons for foster care, the rewards of fostering, and information about an upcoming inquiry meeting.

Area 10

- Completed presentation/announcements in local churches.
- Organized community booth settings to provide information on foster care and adoption (e.g. “Baby & You” program at University of Arkansas in Monticello)
- Collaborated with CASA, Workforce Training Center, Parkway Bank, and local churches on recruitment efforts.
- Utilized radio, newspaper, and banner advertisement to increase awareness of foster care needs and promote recruitment efforts.
- Ms. Southeast Arkansas spoke out for our foster children and their needs. She actively participated in the Drew County Christmas Parade in November.
- Provided flyers to local family resource center.

Objective 4

Support Area and County staff recruitment plans and efforts.

Tasks

- (1) Review current Area/County recruitment plans and foster family needs assessments
- (2) Identify targeted and child-specific recruitment needs
- (3) Incorporate targeted and child-specific needs into Statewide-Area-County plans
- (4) Develop a recruitment guide
- (5) Develop and distribute recruitment tools (brochures, flyers)
- (6) Research recruitment materials and tools
- (7) Identify Area/County needs for recruitment materials and tools

Completion of Tasks by June 30, 2006 and ongoing

Status

Area 1

- Had recruitment inquiry meetings in Washington, Carroll, Benton, and Madison Counties
- Attend county staff meetings to inform staff of recruitment plans; encourage staff to communicate with recruiters about possible prospects

Area 2

- Conducted inquiry meetings

Area 3

- The Area Recruitment Team looked at the Area needs and revised the Area plan.
- The Area has increased the number of Inquiry meetings to three a month.

- The recruitment team members have been trained in completing the Inquiry Screens in CHRIS for inquirers.

Area 4

- DCFS staff has done presentations to nurses in multiple counties on child maltreatment and the need for foster parents.

Area 5

- DCFS staff manned the fair booths and re-supplied materials

Area 7

- DCFS County staff attend inquiry meetings to discuss with prospective foster/adoptive parents know the specific needs of the area.

Area 10

- Conducted inquiry meetings.

Central Office

- Promotional items were ordered and distributed to the Areas.
- The Recruitment Committee meets monthly. Informational materials such as Foster Care Month Toolkit are distributed. The meeting agenda includes information on management issues, policy, and recruitment ideas.
- The Administrative Office of the Courts has partnered with DCFS on recruitment of foster and adoptive homes. Plans include printing and purchasing of posters, billboards, and assistance with providing staff for phone coverage to assist with inquiries.

Objective 5

Coordinate with Adoption recruitment

Tasks

- (1) Partner in the development of a uniform structured inquiry response
- (2) Partner in the development of an inquiry packet
- (3) Partner in participation at conferences (display booths, informational materials)
- (4) Partner in utilization of resources
- (5) Support the development and implementation of adoption grants and initiatives

Completion of Tasks by June 30, 2006 and ongoing

Status

Area 2

- **Adoption staff are included in inquiry meetings**
- **Adoption staff were included in Area Foster Parent Conference**
- **Information on adoptions is included in flyers**

Area 3

- **All events, meetings, and planning for recruitment are done hand in hand.**
- **Garland County has worked with the Adoption Coalition to emphasize recruitment of foster parents; invited Rev. Martin to speak**
- **The Adoption Coalition held a Gallery Walk in November. This display showed the available children in the area waiting for adoptive homes. It also promoted adoption and fostering in the area.**

Area 4

- **Foster Care and Adoption efforts are coordinated in terms of meetings and activities.**
- **The Adoption Specialist and other DCFS staff celebrated Adoption Month in November. There was an article in the Texarkana Gazette which also included information about the need for foster parents.**
- **Columbia County coordinated efforts with the adoption coalition – parade.**

Area 5

- **Adoption materials were included at the fair booths.**
- **Adoption Specialists attend most inquiry meetings.**

Area 6

- **The inquiry meetings are coordinated with the Adoption Unit.**

Area 7

- **Area Adoption Specialists are invited to speak at the inquiry meetings to explain and answer questions about the adoption process.**
- **Attend Adoption Coalition meetings in Lonoke County.**

Area 8

- **The Area VIII Adoption Specialist conducts a monthly support group meeting in Craighead County and invites foster parents from other counties. She is planning on developing a support group in Greene County.**

Area 10

- **Coordinate with Adoption Specialist to provide information at inquiry meetings. Adoption Specialist helps to host the meetings.**
- **Combine efforts with adoptions on recruitment efforts.**

Objective 6

Monitor and Revise Plan

Tasks

- (1)Identify mechanisms to track activities (inquiries, applications, approvals)**
- (2)Monitor and analyze data**
- (3)Develop budget request for funds for Area/County recruitment needs**
- (4))Develop quarterly progress reports**
- (5)Review and revise plan annually**

Completion of Tasks by June 30, 2007

Status

Central Office

- **A quarterly report form was developed for the committee members to complete.**
- **Work has been done to track inquiries through CHRIS.**

Lead Parties

- **The Recruitment Committee will include representatives from each Area and representatives from Central Office Foster Care, Adoptions, Foster Parent Ombudsman and Planning Units**
- **Each Area has designated a lead person to coordinate recruitment efforts**
- **Each Area has Resource Workers who are responsible for recruitment**
- **The role of the Recruitment Committee is to support the Resource Workers in recruitment activities, to advise the administration on recruitment issues and needs, to report on recruitment efforts and activities for the Five Year Plan, and to develop recruitment resources**

ADOPTION RECRUITMENT PLAN FFYS 2005 –2009

Introduction

In June 2004, Arkansas had a pool of one hundred ninety-six (196) approved families waiting for children. Of that 196, 52 or 27% were African-American and 144 or 73% were White. The percentage of African American families has increased from 22% in the FFYS 2000-2004 recruitment plan.

Arkansas had four hundred ninety-eight (498) children waiting to be adopted at the end of SFY 2004. Seventy-six or 15% of these children are living in pre-adoptive homes. Four hundred twenty two children with parental rights terminated were not placed in adoptive homes. Twenty six per cent of the children available for adoption were African American. Sixty three per cent were Caucasian.

At the end of June 2004, there were 3,241 children in foster care, 58% white, 30% African-American, 7% more than one race, and 4% Hispanic. Ages were 25% between the ages of 6 –11, 23% between the ages of 12 – 15, 21% between the ages of 2 – 5, 18% between the ages of 16 – 18, 10% between the ages of 0 – 1 and 1% 18 or older. 50% of these children are male and 50% are female.

Given the characteristics of children described above and the families available for placement, the Division of Children and Family Services will use the strategies outlined in this plan to locate and develop adoptive home resources to meet the needs of waiting children.

Goal I: To improve DCFS' general adoption recruitment and retention efforts

Objective 1: To increase awareness and education of all DCFS/DCO clerical staff concerning adoption.

Task 1: Feature a waiting child or sibling group in the DHS newsletter.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished. The first waiting child was featured in the DHHS newsletter in November 2005 and is ongoing.

Task 2: Develop statewide curriculum and provide training for DCFS/DCO clerical staff on the new web-based adoption inquiry process.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was not accomplished since clerical staff does not have access to CHRIS, the computerized case management system that maintains the inquiry program. Having clerical staff enter an inquiry via the adoption web site is being considered. The training curriculum developed for DCFS Field Staff will be utilized to train DCFS/DCO Clerical. Change Lead responsibility to Community Support/Adoption Services and Secondary Responsibility to Adoption Supervisors and County Administrators. Change accomplish date to December 31, 2006

Task 3: Conduct ongoing continuing education training on adoption for Family Service Workers, Foster and Adoptive Parents, Adoption Specialists, Mental Health Workers, and Community Providers. This will include training that addresses work with diverse cultures, linguistics, racial, and economic communities.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Efforts are underway, but more time is needed to appropriately accomplish this task. Representatives of DCFS adoption staff and MidSouth Training Academy met in September, 2005 and February, 2006 to identify adoption training needs. Adoption staff and MidSouth are developing an orientation curriculum for new family service workers, adoption specialists and adoption supervisors. Four adoption staff and an adoptive parent attended the North American Council on Adoptable Children conference. Four adoption staff members attended the Roundtable Conference. Two adoption staff and one staff member from foster care attended the AdoptUSKids national adoption and foster parent recruitment summit. MidSouth provided life book training statewide from September – November 2005. DCFS adoption staff was involved with members of the Arkansas Adoption Coalition to coordinate and provide a statewide adoption conference that was well attended on November 4 and 5, 2005. A MidSouth representative attended orientation sessions for new DCFS Adoption Specialists in December 2005 to assist in the development of training on adoption for DCFS staff. Central Office adoption support staff and the Adoption Field Services Manager received training on the Latino culture. Change accomplishes date to September 30, 2008.

Objective 2: To promote awareness and education among community organizations

Task 1: Develop a statewide plan for awareness and education on adoption.
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished. A statewide Adoption Recruitment Plan was developed in January 2005.

Task 2: Develop area plans for awareness and education on adoption.
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was not accomplished in all the Adoption Field Service Areas. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2006.

Task 3: Utilize support groups, speaker's bureaus, faith-based groups and other community groups.
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2008

Status: Efforts are underway to accomplish this task. The Northeast Adoption Field Services Area, Central Adoption Field Services Area, Southeast Adoption Field Services Area, and Southwest Adoption Field Services Area have created at least one community based Adoption Coalition to recruit and support adoptive families. The Northwest Arkansas Adoption Field Services Area has initiated efforts to accomplish this task but is in the very early stages of creating a coalition.

Objective 3: To explore post-adoption services

Task 1: Mail letters regarding the availability of post-adoption services to subsidized adoptive families and foster families

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: This task was not accomplished by September 30, 2005. A decision was made to mail the brochure on post adoption services to all adoptive families receiving adoption subsidy and to foster families to advise of the availability of post adoptive services. The mailing of the brochure was delayed to include a survey to assess the need for post

adoption services and the survey was not completed by the above accomplish date. This task was completed June 9, 2006

Task 2: Complete a survey with adoptive families on the need for post-adoption services.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Research for compiling a survey and the development of a survey form were accomplished by September 30, 2005 but the review and revisions were not completed until after this date. Mail list has been completed and the survey was mailed to adoptive parents June 9, 2006.

Task 3: Use results of post-adoption services survey findings to develop and expand post-adoption services.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2006

Status: The survey has been mailed and some responses have been received. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2007 to allow sufficient time for the UALR Graduate School of Social Work to analyze the data for DCFS to develop recommendations for the development and expansion of post adoption services

Objective 4: To monitor the progress of the Adoption Recruitment *Plan* on a quarterly basis

Task 1: Utilize the monitoring tool to monitor progress of recruitment efforts.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished. A progress report form was developed by the Division of Children and Family Services in order to obtain information.

Goal II: To provide targeted recruitment efforts to find homes for waiting children

Objective 1: Each Adoption Specialist will recruit and retain a minimum of ten (10) African American families per year for the next five (5) years (Exception: If the geographical area of one of the Adoption Specialists has less than 5% African American population their minimum number may be adjusted accordingly, but the statewide total will supplement the reduced number).

Task 1: Include in Area Recruitment Plan, the plan for recruiting and retaining African American homes to address this objective.

Accomplish Dates: September 30, 2005 – 10 Families
 September 30, 2006 – 10 Families
 September 30, 2006 – 10 Families
 September 30, 2008 – 10 Families
 September 30, 2009 – 10 Families

Status: Task was not accomplished by September 30, 2005 in each of the five adoptive service areas. There were a total of 53 homes statewide recruited and retained.

Task 2: Coordinate and develop media presentations, written materials, and information packets (to include information related to home study process and agency access) to recruit African American families.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: The Northeast Adoption Field Service Area, the Central Adoption Field Service Area, and the Southwest Adoption Field Service Area have accomplished this task primarily via the Adoption Coalition Grant (federal grant). The Southeast Field Service Area has accomplished portions of this task. They have not coordinated and developed media presentations. The Northwest Adoption field Service Area did not accomplish this task due to other work demands created by the months of staff vacancies. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2007.

Task 3: Establish working relationships with a minimum of ten (10) local community based groups each year per Area.

Accomplish Dates: September 30, 2005 - 10 Groups
 September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups

September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups
September 30, 2008 – 10 Groups
September 30, 2009 – 10 Groups

Status: The Northeast Adoption Field Services Area, Central Adoption Field Services Area, and Southwest Adoption Field Services Area accomplished the task by September 30, 2005. The Southeast Adoption Field Services Area established relationships with seven (7) community based groups. These Areas are presently increasing the number of relationships with community-based groups primarily via the Adoption Coalitions (federal grant). The Northwest Adoption Field Services Area did not accomplish this task due to other work demands created by months of staff vacancies.

Task 4: Develop and maintain at least one adoption support group in each Area.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished in the Northeast Adoption Field Service Area, which currently has five (5) active adoption support groups. The Southwest, Northwest, Southeast, and the Central Adoption Field Service Areas have at least one (1) joint Foster Parent/Adoption Support group.

Objective 2: Recruit and retain adoptive families for teens, children with severe disabilities, and sibling groups of three or more.

Task 1: Coordinate and develop media presentations, written materials, and information packets (to include information related to the home study process and agency access) to recruit adoptive families for teens, children with severe disabilities, and sibling groups of three (3) or more.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: The Northeast Adoption Field Services Area has accomplished this task primarily via the Adoption Coalition (federal grant). The Central Adoption Field Services Area, the Southeast Adoption Field Service Area, and the Southwest Adoption Services Area have accomplished portions of the task, but have not coordinated and developed media presentations. The Northwest Adoption Field Services Area did not accomplish this task due to other work demands created by months of staff vacancies. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2007.

Task 2: Establish working relationships with a minimum of ten (10) local community based groups, for teen recruitment each year per Area.

Accomplish Dates: September 30, 2005 - 10 Groups
 September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups
 September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups
 September 30, 2008 – 10 Groups
 September 30, 2009 – 10 Groups

Status: Task was accomplished in the Southeast, Northeast, Southwest, and Central Adoption Field Services Areas; however, task was not accomplished in the Northwest Adoption Field Service Area due to other work demands created by months of staff vacancies.

Task 3: Establish and maintain at least one post adoption service per Area

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2006

Status: Task has been accomplished. The Northeast Adoption Field Services Area has accomplished this task by establishing parent support groups, lending resource library (each Adoption Specialist's office), and a newsletter. The other four adoption management areas have established a lending resource library (each Adoption Specialist's office).

Goal III: To identify and recruit appropriate adoptive families for specific waiting children

Objective 1: Complete a web site and photo-listing registration on all waiting children with special needs.

Task 1: Identify children with special needs who are legally free for adoption, are not placed with an adoptive family, and are not registered on the DCFS web site and photo-listing.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: All the Adoption Field Services Areas have accomplished this task by identifying the children with special needs who are legally free for adoption, are not placed with an adoptive family, and are not registered on the DCFS web site and photo listing. The areas continue to monitor this on going task.

Task 2: Prepare web site and photo-listing registration packets on the waiting children.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: Task was not accomplished in the all Adoption Field Service Areas by September 30, 2005, however, registration packets were prepared on twenty-six (26) new profiles of waiting children by September 30, 2005, and twenty (20) new profiles were added by December 30, 2005. From January, 2006 thru May, 2006, thirty-five (35) new profiles of waiting children were added. The task is now completed, and areas are maintaining this on going task.

Task 3: Enter the registration of waiting children onto the web site and photo-listing.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: This task was not accomplished on all waiting children in the Adoption Field Service Areas by September, 30, 2005, however, registration packets were forwarded and registrations completed on twenty-six (26) new profiles of waiting children by September 30, 2005 and twenty (20) new profiles were added by December 30, 2005. From January, 2006 thru May, 2006, thirty-five (35) new profiles of waiting children were added. This on going task is being maintained.

Objective 2: Develop placement resources with private and public agencies for waiting children with special needs.

Task 1: Develop a network with private and public agencies to increase the resource of approved adoptive applicants for waiting children with special needs.

Accomplish Date: October 1, 2005 and on-going

Status: This task has been accomplished in that the following activities have been initiated: (1) private agencies are participating in some of the Adoption Coalitions; (2) participation with private agencies in providing a statewide biannual adoption conference; (3) participation with private agencies at adoption information fairs; (4) providing consultation to private agency staff and families regarding the adoption subsidy program; and (5) the acceptance of approved adoption home studies from private agencies and other public agencies for registration in the “matching” database.

Task 2: Develop recommendations for purchase of service for the adoption of specific waiting children with special needs.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was not accomplished by September 30, 2005 but recommendations were completed on June 12, 2006.

Objective 3: Implement a child specific recruitment plan

Task 1: Complete a child specific recruitment form on every waiting child.
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: Task was not accomplished. All areas are working on this task. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2007.

Objective 4: Identify and utilize available community resources to find families for specific waiting children with special needs.

Task 1: Identify during concurrent planning families who have significant ties to a waiting child and determine if it is appropriate to consider the families for adoption placement.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: This task was not accomplished. Change the accomplish date to September 30, 2007.

Task 2: Plan and implement at least five activities during the federal fiscal year to recruit adoptive families for specific waiting children per Area.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: All adoption field service areas exceeded five activities during the federal fiscal year ending September, 30, 2005 with an exception of the Northwest Adoption Field Service Area, which did not have any activities due to other work demands created by the months of staff vacancies. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2007.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR UPCOMING FISCAL YEAR
ADOPTION SERVICES

- Maintain the Adoption Coalition in DHHS/DCFS Areas III, IV, V, VI, VII, IX, and X
- Build new Adoption Coalitions in DHHS/DCFS Areas I, II, VIII
- Continue the enhancements to the DHHS/DCFS adoption web site, Arkansas Adoption Resource Exchange. Enhancements include video clips of waiting children and profiles of waiting approved adoptive applicants to assist DCFS Adoption Specialist in selecting adoptive families for children.
- Continue the development of resource packets for general, targeted, and child specific recruitment.
- Establish relationships with private, licensed adoption agencies to support recruitment of adoptive families for children in foster care.
- Present workshops on adoption at the statewide foster parent conference.
- Assist in planning a state-wide adoption conference with the Arkansas Adoption Coalition (not associated with the federal grant) scheduled for 2007.
- Work with CHRIS staff on continued development of reports in CHRISNet on the foster and adoptive parent inquiry process.
- Establish workgroup for the adoption recruitment plan.
- Work with the Recruitment Response Team (RRT) to identify and resolve problems.

Adoption Incentive

DHHS/DCFS did not receive adoption incentive monies for state fiscal year.

Current Executive Initiatives

Four (4) Fatherhood Initiatives are funded (CAPTA). Two of the four programs were funded this fiscal year. The program assists males between the age of 15 – 35 to establish strong, responsible and effective relationships with their children. Program support includes parenting education, employment counseling and referrals, relationship counseling, discipline, legal issues and planned activities with children.

DCFS has Youth Development through the division Chaffee and ETV programs.

The Division has Faith Based and Community Initiative through Adoption Coalitions which utilize Faith base and Community Counsels for adoptive home recruitment and foster home recruitment.

Certificate and Assurances

There have been no changes in the certifications and assurances submitted with the most recent CFSP submitted in 2004.

